

Abortion: crime or social responsibility essay



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Population control comes in many forms: cancer, famine, A. I. D. S, genocide, war and natural disasters, but never has one been so celebrated and socially accepted before abortion. Abortion has been practiced for hundreds of years and medical technology has advanced accordingly; providing a safer and much more sanitary procedure for the women receiving the operation, but the result remains the same for the defenseless child.

Abortion continues to be one of the most debated and country dividing topics this nation has seen. In the recent past, there has been steady movement towards the governmental restrictions of abortion. The Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act of 2003 was one of the greatest victories in congress related to this topic. The ban restricts a certain form of abortion (partial-birth abortion) past 24 weeks from conception (United States Congress). Even though this is a positive step in the right and moral direction, the act needs to be revised.

It needs to have the allotted time reduced from 24 weeks to 20 weeks based upon new medical research that fetuses can “ feel pain” prior to 24 weeks. Abortion will never become completely illegal (that is just harsh reality), but the restrictions that govern abortions can be fine tuned to incorporate a smaller and more humane window for abortions. Abortion has been a topic of debate for the past two hundred years. During the years shortly after our country’s independence, abortion laws were little to none other than the common law adopted from England; which held abortion to be legally acceptable if occurring before quickening (the fetus’s ability to stir in the womb) (Lee). Various anti-abortion statutes began to appear in the 1820s, and by 1900 abortion was largely illegal in every state.

Some states did include provisions allowing for abortion in limited circumstances; generally with the purpose of protecting the woman's life or pregnancies related to rape or incest (Kauthen). This nation-wide ban of abortion only lasted for a couple decades. Roe vs. Wade is one of the most pivotal Supreme Court cases with regards to the abortion movement. By the end of the hearing, the courts decided that abortion was a constitutionally protected right of women and their right to privacy (Garlikov).

This decision laid the foundation for legal arguments and, even today, is still taken into consideration as a precedent of common law. Roe vs. Wade made it possible for any women to receive an abortion at any time and for any reason, and women did just that. poorly concluded paragraph According to the figures from the Alan Guttmacher Institute, half of all abortions in the U. S.

each year are performed on women under the age of 25, and one in five involves teenagers (Hausknecht). In the year 2006 there were 4. million child births in the United States, in the same year there were more than 1. 37 million abortions performed (Hausknecht).

That's approximately one abortion for ever three births, and that's not the most shocking statistic. An estimated 43% of all women will have at least one abortion by the time they are 45 years old and 47% of all abortions are performed on women who have had at least one previous abortion (Hausknecht)! In today's society more women are delaying starting a family until they are in their thirties. This suggests that the high number of abortions will remain high, and quite possibly increase, in coming years.

Nearly a quarter of the women surveyed who have had an abortion say they opted for the procedure because they wanted to postpone motherhood (Hausknecht). The large majority of women who do choose to abort their pregnancies do so within the first 15 weeks, in fact nearly 95 percent have the operation performed during that time period (Hausknecht). This leaves five percent of women still having an abortion 20 weeks and later from conception.

Five percent may not sound like a large statistic but when you consider it is nearly 68, 500 women a year, it brings the issue back into perspective as to why 24 week maximum is just not acceptable. Science has seen its fair share of advancements in recent years; cloning, stem cell research, cancer treatments and most important to this topic of abortion, the ability to determine whether or not a fetus can sense pain. It was believed that a fetus had no pain receptors until late in the third trimester (Gibbs). This estimate of pain sensory has now been proven to be very wrong. There is substantial evidence that by the tenth week, unborn fetuses draw away from surgical instruments in a manner that an infant or an adult would. This reaction is now being interpreted as a response to pain (Willke).

This is scientifically documented in the movie “ Silent Scream”. Silent Scream is a Real-time ultrasound video tape of a 12- week suction abortion procedure. It dramatically, but factually, shows the pre-born baby dodging the suction instrument time after time, while its heartbeat doubles in rate. When finally caught, its body being dismembered, the baby’s mouth clearly opens wide (hence, the title). Director Rodger White of the Neurosurgery & Brain Research institute at Western University said, “ The fetus within this <https://assignbuster.com/abortion-crime-or-social-responsibility-essay/>

time frame of gestation, 20 weeks and beyond is fully capable of experiencing pain (Gibbs). Without doubt a partial birth abortion is a dreadfully painful experience for any infant”.

This strong evidence is the very reason the partial-birth abortion ban act needs to be revised to limit the gestation period to 20 weeks, but not all individuals share this sentiment. There are two sides to any argument, and abortion is no different. Pro-life activists believe abortion is immoral, unethical and should be permanently banned from practice. On the polar opposite side of the debate, are the Pro-choice. These activists declare it is a women’s constitutionally protected right to do with her body as she pleases. Pro-choice individuals don’t necessarily promote abortion as a way of contraceptive but rather feel rules and restrictions shouldn’t govern their bodies.

Both sides have strong arguments that rely on a broad field of debate. Pro-life depend on the argument of ethics and moral decisions; aborting a baby may be legal as of now but is it the “ right” thing to do? On the other hand Pro-choice use the argument of constitutional rights; it’s my body, my life (Garlikov). Not only do both these arguments sum up the debate on either side they also depict the political status of an individual. Typically persons who support Pro-life have an affinity for Republican stances; on the same note, Democrats usually support Pro-choice or the loosely restrictive laws that are in place now but have no intentions of revising them. These are broad generalizations, but typically hold true.

While discussing the topic of abortion law revision keep in mind the staunch differences between the two groups debating over the topic. It will allow a more complete understanding as to why law has yet to be changed, but at the same time why it is still moving in a pro-life direction. The most frequent kind of reform to the abortion law proposed as of late, has been to lower the legal time limit. This is what individuals should understand; it is not just an idea that is needed. You must believe strongly enough to make a difference and take the appropriate actions to create the difference you want to see in the world. It's not enough to support the cause; you need to take an active stance in the cause.

Oregonians need to unite and speak to their elected representatives and inform them through letters, petitions, protest, and debates as to how they can, and should, make a difference. In order to see a movement in office towards the lowering of the legally allotted time limit on abortion, the citizens need to propose an idea to local representatives (in this case regarding abortion). In order to get a bill passed it must go through several stages of reform; a bill is written, passed through the senate committee, then to the house for majority vote, then to the president for a veto or acceptance to create and implement the new law. Of course this is the simplest explanation of how a bill is passed, but in order to get this ban reformed, a bill must be first drafted at the lowest of levels, the state level.

To do this, one must first know and understand who represents their state. Ron Wyden, Oregon's federal democratic senator, has an extremely liberal voting record concerning abortion and related issues. He voted "no" on all acts attempting to prohibit partial birth abortions (Gov). On the other hand,

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Gordon Smith, Oregon's republican federal senator, has described himself as pro-life, and in 2003 he voted along party lines to pass the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act (Gov).

Gordon Smith is the man that needs to be informed of the growing concern of his elected peoples. A petition is the easiest and most effect way to demonstrate concern toward a cause. Lowering the time allotted for partial-birth abortion would compliment a petition nicely. College campuses, political meetings, parks, fair grounds; these are various types of venues that one could potential see large amount of supporters willing to sign a petition. Once a petition is signed by a substantial amount of people, it can be taken directly to the Oregon's republican federal senator, Gordon Smith.

Who will then draft a proposed law to go through the said democratic process above. Abortion is no longer an underground procedure done in back alleyways and dark basements. It sadly has become a fairly common procedure with which a large number of women take advantage of. This reality doesn't change the fact that some individuals agree with abortion and some do not.

While these two sects defend their stances on a political battlefield there will never be a resolution let alone a compromise. The only way to gain ground on changing the partial-birthed abortion ban act is through a bill proposal. This is how it was done in the past and it is the way progress will be seen in the future. Undoubtedly the debate on abortion will rage on and this humble proposal will quickly be forgotten but I hope at some point in this Works Cited Garlikov, Richard. Garlikov: Abortion Debate.

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