STANDPOINT ESSAY:

Abortion Rights

Lauren Milne

Western Washington University

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**STANDPOINT INTRODUCTION**

One of the major reasons people are hyped up about the elections this year is the topic of women’s rights issues, specifically in the area of abortion rights. The different opinions on this topic are separated into three categories: pro-life, pro-choice, and pro-abortion. People who consider themselves pro-life believe that it is immoral to dictate who deserves to live or die and/or it is not their right as children of God. Those of the pro-choice variety believe outlawing abortion would lead to more butchered, unprofessional attempts at abortion and/or they don’t believe it is right to dictate what others do with their own body. Finally, those that are pro-abortion believe that abortion is a better option than having a difficult, stressful life and/or it’s not immoral to kill something that isn’t “quite” human yet. The category I fall into is that of firmly pro-life. My stance on the subject is that I don’t believe in murder. Abortion is murder to me just the same as euthanasia, the death penalty, and “professional” assisted suicides are. When it comes to exceptions, I have none. The reasoning behind me having no exceptions is simple.

On the issue of a mother’s livelihood at stake, I can’t justify abortion because in my personal opinion allowing someone to have a chance at life is more important than continuing someone’s existence that has already had such experiences, however small. To me, the ability to sacrifice oneself for another is the greatest act of kindness—but also the most difficult. I also have researched the medical advances we’ve made in regards to pregnancy risks. Though there are still some terminal illnesses and other diseases that, when a woman becomes pregnant, causes heightened health risks, the medical professionals are now able to monitor the health of the mother and child more effectively and in many circumstances save both lives.

Age and maturity is another argument for abortion, my response is that if an individual deems themselves capable of having sexual relations then they need to except all possibilities—complicated relationships, diseases and infections, and pregnancy. My parents weren’t ready in the slightest, they still kept me. My friend Sheryl hadn’t even graduated high school, she took responsibility even though (she admits) she seriously considered abortion. My friend Stephanie was raped; her son just turned one. I’ve witnessed others succeed and we’ve all seen snippets of Teen Mom and 16 & Pregnancy. It’s difficult, but it’s possible. Abortion, to me, is a cop out to avoid parenting classes and responsibility.

In regards to poverty I see abortion as a gateway to more medical problems. There are millions of people living in poverty with large and medium and small families. One might make the excuse that they have larger families because abortion isn’t accessible. My point is, they make it work. They take up their responsibility and move on. I’ve lived in poverty and I know many others who have. Poverty adds a large amount of stress, but it doesn’t make *living* impossible.

Finally, with the case of pregnancy through rape, I don’t see abortion as a healing process. Rather, I see it only adding to the problem. I already mentioned my friend Stephanie. She owes her life to her son. The statistics of risk of suicide increase after an abortion. What’s more, an abortion may take away some of the pain from the rape, but it gives new pain as a replacement. Abortion is not the only means to rape recovery, and I would dare to say I believe it’s much more dangerous.

**THE “ROOTS”**

The “roots” behind why I am firmly pro-life are deep and powerful. My family’s own experiences with life or death situations have affected me very strongly and along with that, my Catholic faith. The way media portrays abortion is also part of my reasoning and, since it is less personal, I will begin with that piece.

To say media is influential is an understatement and the fact of its power is something I actually do not like. I cannot stand the way media obscures topics and events or the way it picks and chooses the “important” information. I learned a lot about media in school and, I admit, I was not impressed. So, when I see the media focus so much attention on one topic, I tend to research the other sides. In this case—abortion. I’ve since learned a lot about seedier side to abortion clinics and (more specifically) Planned Parenthood that disgusted me. From then on, I’ve found I could never see eye to eye with such organizations.

But I suppose a stronger influence than my personal research has been the stance of my immediate family. As I’ve stated in class previously, my father got my mother pregnant at the age of 24. Recently, I had a conversation with my eldest brother on the subject and he said, “if it hadn’t been for their values on life, none of us may ever have been born.” That is the truth. If it wasn’t for my family’s pro-life stance, there’s a chance I wouldn’t exist. My immediate and extended families have all been faced with hard times. My uncle conceived a child with Down’s Syndrome with an adventurous woman—while he was married to another. My aunt nearly died from critical health conditions when pregnant and giving birth to my cousin. My grandfather got my grandmother pregnant when he was engaged to another woman. My cousin chose to keep her child after the relationship with her boyfriend fell through. All were faced with scenarios in which abortion might have seemed like the best escape route, but they chose to face their actions instead.

What might have influenced them, as it influenced me, was the faith of the Catholic Church and their stance on abortion. Not all of my family follows Catholicism, but I believe it is laced within my family’s core values. The Catholic doctrine teaches that all life is sacred and any act that threatens the existence of life is a sin.

**MY EVOLVING STANCE**

The biggest changes to my standpoint on abortion have been in regards to the risk of health to the mother and rape. However, my change isn’t that they should be covered. It’s the perspective that abortion is wrong even in those scenarios. Several years ago I would have held exceptions in the case of rape and health risks, but after doing my own research, I have changed my perspective. As I stated in the previous section, I now see keeping the child to be healthier for the woman than to have an abortion.

**THE INVISIBLE ISSUES**

 Of course, even if I firmly believe in my stance, it is still missing pieces. I purposefully left out the controversial topic of incest because I still have trouble wrapping my head around it. I’ve listened to talks given by people born from those circumstances, and their plea to let the children live, but I’ve found it’s a hard topic for me to wrap my head around. This is mostly due to societal norms.

**ADVANTAGES and DISADVANTAGES**

 Some of the advantages of my stance as a pro-life advocate include less female suicide, giving the right to life to infants in the womb, and more education about all forms of women’s health. There are more affordable women’s health clinics than just Planned Parenthood. These clinics struggle because of the attention Planned Parenthood gets. Each of these clinics is also unique in its own special way. Their voices deserve to be heard as well. The disadvantages that arise from my stance are that people in difficult circumstances might have harder times getting out of their slump with an extra mouth to feed, illegal abortions could occur, and Planned Parenthood would lose the largest income of their corporation (though I *personally* don’t see that as a disadvantage).

**MY STANCE and HUMAN SERVICES**

The way in which my stance affects my work in Human Services is a difficult thing for me to picture. For one, I will probably not work in an area of woman’s health. However, if I did, I would potentially face conflicts with my organization, co-workers, and clients advocating for abortion rights. Even outside of work related to women’s health, the human service realm is very political. Many people in this career path may not agree with something, but they still fight so that the rights of/for that something are not taken away, giving people and equal chance. Because I view abortion as an unequal opportunity, I will have the most difficult time with Human Services for that reason.