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Best Essay

Abortions; What Everyone Needs to Know

“Making abortion illegal doesn’t stop abortions. It stops safe abortions.”

Abortions have been a big topic in women’s health for years now. Over if it should be illegal or legal if it’s the mother’s right or the father’s right to choose, and separation between church and state. Everyone has their own opinion on abortions, even if they don’t have a uterus to begin with. Most people know it’s important why we need abortions, whilst others believe the fetus’s life is more important than the mothers.

What are abortions?

According to *Planned Parenthood*, they define abortion as a procedure to end a pregnancy. Mostly happens before the 13-week mark of a pregnancy at 92% with 1.2% happenings after the first trimester. An Early Abortion is when the pregnancy is terminated in the 12-14 week (about 3 months) of pregnancy it acquires less medical attention and appointments. Both surgery and medication can terminate, along with being the safest.

Medication Abortion is a combination of two drugs, depending on the situation. Mifepristone is used to stop the growth of pregnancy and to detach the egg from the uterus's wall. The second drug is called Misoprostol and it’s used for the uterus to expel the Embryo from the vaginal cavity.

The most well-known type of abortion, Surgical Abortion can be performed up to 22 weeks (about 5 months) but is more expensive than having it before the first trimester. The surgery is performed with local anesthesia and with pain relievers if preferred by the women. During the surgery, a speculum (a duck-bill-shaped medical tool) is inserted into the vagina to stretch the cervix, with a small tube to suck the embryo. This normally lasts less than 10 minutes and is not used much as people would think.

Why have an abortion?

The research article was written by Dr. Antonia Biggs “Understanding why women seek abortions in the US” explains that women fall into 11 themes of wanting an abortion. One of the reasons is because of a financial issue with 40%, 36% being due to the timing of the pregnancy, relationship problems being 31%, and the need to focus on their other children is 29%. Many more reasons are shown in the table below, provided by Dr. Antonia Biggs “Understanding why women seek abortions in the US.”

	Freq.	Percent
Not financially prepared	386	40%

General financial	365	38%
Unemployed/underemployed	41	4%
Uninsured or can't get welfare	6	0.6%
Don't want government assistance	4	0.4%
Not the right time for a baby	347	36%
Bad timing/not ready/unplanned	321	34%
Too busy/not enough time	17	2%
Too old	16	2%
Partner related reasons	298	31%
Relationship is bad, poor and/or new	89	9%
Respondent wants to be married first/not a single mom	80	8%
Partner is not supportive	77	8%
Partner is wrong guy	61	6%
Partner does not want baby	29	3%
Partner is abusive	24	3%
Need to focus on other children	275	29%
Too soon after having had a child/busy enough with current children/have enough children right now	239	25%
Concern for other children she is rearing	51	5%
Interferes with future opportunities	194	20%
Interferes with educational plans	132	14%
Interferes with vocational plans	63	7%
Want better life for self/don't want to limit future opportunities	49	5%
Not emotionally or mentally prepared	180	19%
Health related reasons	114	12%
Concern for her own health	59	6%
Concern for the health of the fetus	51	5%
Drug, tobacco, or alcohol use	46	5%
Prescription drug (not illicit) or contraceptive use	14	1.5%
Want a better life for the baby than she could provide	119	12%
Want better life for baby	67	7%
Living or housing context not suitable for baby	46	5%

Lack of childcare or help from family to care for baby	13	1.4%
Don't want her children to have a childhood like hers	5	0.5%
Not independent or mature enough for a baby	64	7%
Too young or immature	47	5%
Can't take care of self	12	1.3%
Too dependent on parents or others right now	9	0.9%
Influences from family or friends	48	5%
Would have a negative impact on family or friends	22	2%
Don't want others to know/worried others would judge	19	2%
Pressure from family or friends	11	1.2%
Don't want a baby or place baby for adoption	38	4%
Don't want a baby or don't want any children	33	3%
Don't want adoption	7	0.7%
Other	11	1.2%
Total	954	100%

Dr. Biggs's study concluded that women have many complex and interrelated reasons to have an abortion. Many women have more than one reason for getting one, which can be due to health issues, and if they're mentally ready for pregnancy and a child.

The most common thing for doctors recommending an abortion for the mother is when the mother's health is at risk, and birth defects, along with miscarriages as stated in "Common reasons for recommended abortions."

For the miscarriage, one could happen before 15-weeks of pregnancy, it would be referred to as a loss of a fetus. About 20% of pregnancies end in the mother's miscarrying, which can be defined as the absence of the fetus's heartbeat diagnosed with the examiner by an ultrasound. Along with medical technology being developing the doctors can detect birth defects in the first trimester of pregnancy using ultrasounds, amniocentesis (the needle is inserted to get amniotic fluid to test it), and blood testing. All these can test for Birth defects, there's a good chance your mother had to get at least one of these tests done when she was pregnant with you.

Birth defects are when problems occur during the development of the fetus, they may affect how the baby acts, looks, and cognitive levels. Children with birth defects can cause several serious health problems during their lifetime: heart defects, abnormal limb development,

omphalocele, etc. It is a personal choice if the mother wants to abort the fetus if they feel that they can't take care of a child with a defect, mentally and financially.

Another reason is if the mother's health is at risk, moderate or severe. Health problems like heart disease can cause the mother to have an increase in blood pumping in the heart, increasing the rate of heart attacks. Of course, it depends on if the mother wants to risk her health to have a child that's on her, but if she does want to abort therapeutic abortion is recommended.

The History behind abortions

Surprisingly, abortions were legal in the US between 1600 and the 1800s said the *Eastside Gynecology's* website. It was publicized with having ads in the papers and widely practiced by medical practitioners. Even Churches back then was agreeing with it, they saw it as a way of quickening (before you can feel the fetus move in the womb.)

They state that "it's complex as to why abortions become illegal." One of the reasons was during the Women Suffrage Movement (1840-1920), which was more than allowing women to vote. The movement was having equality for women, both for economic and political. This causes an increase in employment for women and for women to start entering universities like Harvard with majoring in Gynecology. When women weren't accepted, they created their organizations with classes near the Harvard campus, along with allowing willing professors to take these classes.

Abortion was publicized back then and was something to do with the women's bodies. The men at that time saw it as their jobs being in jeopardy, due to men dominating the medical system.

Under the section titled "Along with the founding of The American Medical Association" (AMA) (1847-present), when this organization was formed it sauté off on to making Abortion illegal. The AMA believes that when women are pregnant, they can waste time at home instead of taking over the medical community. They sabotage the future for women's reproductive rights out of fear of them taking over men's jobs.

Back before the Roe v Wade era when abortions were illegal. Mothers would have to take the situation into their own hands to have an abortion, desperate times call for desperate measures. At that time, mothers would consume Lysol and other household poisons, knitting needles, coke bottles, and wire coat hangers to terminate. Some say that women back then took to suicide to abort the fetus, due to rape and incest cases.

Why would people think its murder?

Murder, defined by *Cornell Law school LII*, as killing another human being with malice aforethought. Such as intent-to-kill murder, grievous-bodily-harm murder, felony murder, and depraved heart murder. Not once did it ever state that abortion is a way of killing or murdering.

Many pro-lifers believe that life starts at conception when the sperm enters the egg. A book titled "Scarlet A: The Ethics, Law, and Politics of Ordinary Abortion" written by Katie Watson explains that half of the fertilized eggs fail to implant ending with 20 percent of pregnancies end in miscarriage. Then speaks about that if Pro-lifers believes fertilized eggs are equivalent to life, then why aren't they devoted to research on stopping miscarriages from happening? If they

believed that a baby's life is important, then they should put their time and work to limit miscarriages instead of telling mothers what to do with their bodies.

One reason pro-lifers believe that a fetus shouldn't be terminated is that they'll feel 'pain'. The window of being able to have an abortion as was stated above is when fertilization starts and into the second trimester, rare of a third-trimester abortion other than for medical reasons. This can last up to 22 weeks (about 5 months) at most to be able to have a safe abortion for the female. But the article, Live Science, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) stated that the fetus isn't able to feel pain until the third trimester, 27 weeks.

Another reason you'll see pro-lifers use on a pregnant woman is that Motherhood is a wonderful thing, which for most isn't.

During pregnancy, the mother will have symptoms, other than morning sickness and cravings. Due to the hormonal change pregnancy causes, it can have the mother to develop mood swings, and after delivery, a drop in hormones can cause Postpartum Depression, which can cause the mother to commit suicide. Along with most miscarriages happen during the first trimester, half of the pregnancies end up a miscarriage. This can cause a very traumatic situation for the parents, but mostly the mother since the mother bond more to the baby.

Then around the 20-week mark is when you'll find out the gender of the fetus. This test is mostly just to find out if abnormalities have formed during the development of the fetus that can last during the pregnancy and to the delivery process. CDC estimates that 1 in 33 infants are born with an abnormality or a birth defect just in the US every year.

Why abortion is important?

One thing I've read in an article from *The Texas Tribune* was about a couple in Texas. To start Taylor Mahaffey (23) felt something was wrong with the fetus around the 20-week mark of her pregnancy. She and her husband rushed to the hospital, where she found out she has an incompetent cervix, where the cervix dilates prematurely, and her son's legs were dangling out of her vagina. This caused a dangerous situation for both the mother and the fetus.

They've consulted with a pediatric surgeon who said that there are surgeries to help her son's condition, but in the end, even the surgeon stated that her son's case was too severe for her son to live past birth. The parents wanted to have a late abortion to not have their son suffer but due to the abortion restrictions in Texas, that wasn't an option. Texas has House Bill 2, which states that if the mother and fetus are healthy then abortion isn't needed. They couldn't induce Taylor for labor due to the baby not being able to live outside the womb. They advise her to "let nature takes its course," this causes Taylor to have a stillbirth. A stillbirth is when the mother gives birth to a non-living baby, usually after 20 to 28 weeks (about 6 and a half months) of the pregnancy. This caused Taylor to feel guilt and grief for her son feeling like it was her fault, like most mothers who had a stillbirth would go through.

Another article from *CNN Health* titled "Women have abortions for many reasons aside from rape and incest" the fetus can develop a rare and severe condition. During her second trimester, Erica Goldblatt Hyatt learned that her son had developed Congenital High Airway Obstruction Syndrome which is when the trachea did not form. This can frequently lead to the mother having a miscarriage, due to no oxygen being delivered to the fetus. She and the husband have consulted with the fetal surgeon on staff, and even they said that there is a possibility of surgery for the fetus, but the son's case was too severe to fix just like Taylor's case.

Even though the fetus can 'breathe' in the womb due to the mother's placenta, without a trachea being developed, the oxygen itself cannot travel towards the brain. And without oxygen getting to the brain, the fetus was diagnosed to be brain dead (stillbirth) at delivery.

Lastly, some women have abortions due to protection not working.

In the same article, Casey Duran was on birth control and was practicing safe sex, but those things aren't 100% effective. She was living on minimum wage, barely making with due by herself. So, if she wasn't able to have an abortion at that time, she would have been living on assistance, raising a child with little to no money, and using public transportation which is often denied by lawmakers thinking people are taking advantage of it.

Many females who have decided to have an abortion is due to having a personal reason, a case of rape or incest, medical reasoning, along with it being a life-or-death situation.

The reason for this essay is trying to bring light to the situation that's taking place of the government deciding if women have the right to abort. Personally, many women believe that even if abortions become illegal to have, it will only cause more pain and more dangerous procedures to be done like what before Roe v Wade was created. Which will end having more mothers and fetuses dying, along with whoever is involved in the situation feeling grief. Abortion is a hard decision to make and a personal one. Understanding the situation and reasoning for a mother to choose to abort can save the mother more than you can think, along with the future of the woman.

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