

## **Pro-Woman Answers to Pro-Choice Questions**

### ***Talking Points***

- No woman deserves to have an abortion.
- "It's our body. It's our choice." That translates into "It's our problem."
- Abortion advocates pit women against children. Lack of resources and support are the real enemies.
- We need to systematically eliminate the root causes of abortion - primarily lack of practical resources and emotional support.

### ***Avoid diversions from what is important***

Those who oppose our pro-woman, pro-life position often bring up ancillary issues they believe will cast us in a negative light. Be prepared to reject the confrontational, negative tactics and reinforce our woman-centered message and solutions.

- Sometimes you are talking to a woman who has had an abortion. She may assume that you are choosing a baby over women or condemning her. Never attack the questioner.
- Acknowledge the reasons that drive women to abortion, but emphasize that abortion is not the answer. Women need holistic solutions and deserve real support.

### ***Rape and incest***

- It is normal to wish you could erase a painful experience such as rape. The woman deserves our support.
- Abortion is a second act of violence against the woman. It doesn't erase the memory.
- We should punish the perpetrator of the crime, not the victims.
- One Vanderbilt med student told other students that the "abortion was worse than the rape."
- Pregnancy is not a punishment. Julie Makimaa's mother ("Victory Over Violence" issue of The American Feminist) told her that she was the "only good thing to come out of the rape."
- When someone asks about exceptions for rape and incest, we must think of how that makes those feel who were conceived through sexual assault. As one Berkeley grad student said to her pro-choice peers, "I have a right to be here."
- Rebecca Wasser Kiessling, a young attorney and mother who was conceived through sexual assault asks, "Did I deserve the death penalty?"
- Could you look at someone conceived in violence and tell him or her they never should have been born?

### ***What if your daughter was pregnant?***

- I would love her and support her unconditionally and welcome my grandchild into this world.

### ***What if your daughter was raped?***

- I would love her and my grandchild unconditionally, and I would do everything in my power to prosecute the perpetrator to the fullest extent of the law.

### ***Imposing values and morality on others/What gives you the right to tell women what to do?***

- Our values are based on principles of nonviolence and nondiscrimination.
- I simply believe that we can do better for women. Don't you?

***Don't women need to control their own lives?***

- Obviously if she were truly in control and did not want to be pregnant then she wouldn't be pregnant. The question now is, what is the best possible nonviolent outcome for her?

***Don't you respect women enough to allow her to make a choice?***

- Women do not have abortions as a matter of choice, but because they feel they have no support or resources to support a different choice. A coerced decision is not a free choice; it's a last resort.
- We support non-violent choices single motherhood, fatherhood, grandparenthood, marriage and various adoption options.
- A society that promotes abortion as a necessity underestimates women.

***What if her partner, friends or family abandoned her?***

- Lack of support often coerces women into abortion. She needs to know that there are perfect strangers out there who will care for her even if those she counts on the most have let her down.
- She also needs to know about child support laws that prohibit coercion by the father by physical force or threats to withhold child support.

***What if she is poor?***

- We do not eliminate poverty by eliminating poor women's children. It is degrading to poor women to expect or imply that their children aren't welcome.
- She needs to know that there are pregnancy care centers listed in the abortion alternatives section of the yellow pages that provide direct assistance and coordinate public and private assistance.

***She "just doesn't want it"***

- It's always more complicated than that. We can address each of her concerns working together for peaceful solutions.

***You are anti-woman***

- Abortion destroys that which makes us women.
- As Alice Paul, the original author of the Equal Rights Amendment, said, "Abortion is the ultimate exploitation of women."
- Abortion is a reflection that we have failed women - and women have settled for less.

***The "morning after" pill, so-called "emergency contraception"***

- The "morning after" pill is basically a mega-dose of chemicals.
- There has been no testing or information about the long-term effects of these drugs on women and future children.

***RU-486***

- Rather than being a simple, private alternative to surgical abortion, it actually requires three or four visits to a doctor.
- Women may suffer the trauma of aborting at home or work and seeing a recognizable

fetus.

- Men wouldn't tolerate a drug this potentially dangerous and ineffective. Why should women?
- If a miscarriage is one of the worst things a woman can experience, then intentionally inducing an abortion is a reflection that we have failed her.

### ***Partial-birth Abortion***

- Partial-birth abortion requires three days of coerced labor.
- Women are awake during the delivery and witness their children's brains being removed from their children's skulls. How will this affect women emotionally and psychologically?
- The procedure can damage the cervix, contributing to multiple miscarriages in the future.

### ***Disability - What if the fetus is or could be disabled?***

- If actual or potential disability is a reason to devalue children before birth, what cruel message does this send to disabled people who are already born?

### ***Population - Aren't there enough children in this world, and what about those in foster care?***

- There are two million vetted American couples awaiting adoption. Many of the children waiting to be adopted are waiting because of legal processes, not lack of loving homes.
- The population in this country has increased because of legal and illegal immigration and longevity not births. Forty million abortions in 30 years have not enriched our country.

### ***Make abortion rare***

- They say they want to make abortion rare but available. Why would you want to make something rare unless it is bad? We want to make abortion rare, unthinkable, and unnecessary.

### ***Personally opposed***

- Why are you opposed to it?
- If it is not good enough for you, why do you think it is good enough for other women? I wouldn't wish an abortion on my worst enemy.

### ***So you believe that a tiny speck a zygote, blastocyst, embryo or fetus has rights over a woman?***

- I don't believe in discrimination based on size, age or location. Do you believe that a child has less of a right to exist because they are small? Are large or tall people more valuable than small or short people? If that is the case, most women should have fewer rights than men!
- Fetus is a Latin word meaning "young child" or "young one." But in practice fetus is becoming a clinical, dehumanized term for an unborn child. Imagine if some group tried to deny medical care for gravidas. Once someone figured out that was the Latin word for pregnant women, the bewilderment would quickly shift to outrage.

### ***If "it" can't feel pain***

- Neonatal pain experts have testified before Congress that the younger one is, the more sensitive to pain they are - and the unborn the most sensitive of all.

- Women feel the emotional and physical pain from an abortion, too.

#### ***Clinic violence***

- Violent individuals do not represent the pro-life movement any more than the Unabomber represents the environmental movement.

#### ***A few final thoughts on confrontational situations***

- When confronted or insulted, don't take it personally. Take it as an opportunity to learn, share, educate and inform.
- Look at the issue from a "pro-choice" viewpoint. Point out how our approach actually gives women more choices by addressing the reasons that drive women to abortion.
- Remember that those under 30 have never known a day without legalized abortion, and it has been sold to them as a right, like owning slaves in other countries today, and in our country over a century ago. Challenge them to think for themselves.

Don't be surprised when most of your listeners who expected to differ with you greatly end up saying, "I agree with 95% of what you are saying."

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