

Respect
LIFE

ABORTION:

Ultimately, an Agonizing Private Battle For

By JULI LOESCH

A woman who becomes pregnant and does not have the support of the child's father or her own family too often becomes the "ideal" candidate for abortion. While perhaps this has always been the case, it is even more so today when abortion is widely available and socially accepted.

Our society has made abortion "easy" — at least in terms of accessibility. But is it so easy? While some women may undergo an abortion with little or no physical or emotional trauma, it is becoming apparent, as more and more women speak of their abortion experience, that they are far fewer than pro-abortion advocates would lead one to believe.

Why do so many women feel they "must" abort? Why do others, faced with similar situations, choose life for their child? I would like to tell you the stories of three women — or rather, I would like to let them speak for themselves.

Evelyn

It was almost 40 years ago. I was a university student. All my friends and I came to the university for intellectual exploration and also glorious love and freedom. Part of what we found was a mess of abortions.

Some women say their decision to have an abortion was their first serious decision. It was not like that with me, nor, I think, with my friends. The decision to sleep with our boyfriends, to live with them, was serious, and involved immense changes. But the decision to have an abortion was not difficult. If you had a problem pregnancy, then, of course, you had an abortion.

I look back on that with amazement. Why of course? I think the compelling element was our desire to see ourselves and be seen as good people. A "good" woman does not pressure her boyfriend into marriage. A "good" laughter does not upset her parents, does not become someone whose conduct needs to be explained. A "good" person does not make choices that create complications for powerful people in her life — boyfriend, parents, friends.

And so, when I realized I was pregnant, without thinking, assuming I was doing the only possible thing, I looked for an abortionist.

It was not hard to find one. He was in a small apartment in a poor section of town. It was much like any doctor's office, but bare. The doctor performed competently. It did not hurt much. I rested briefly, paid the doctor \$250, and went home.

When it was over, I felt nothing, no grief, no shame. Gradually, as feeling returned, I began to ask myself what we were doing, my friends and I.



(NC photo from UPI)



What kind of world were we building? It became clear to me that we were building the wrong sort of world, a world in which a mother could kill her own child and it would be just nothing, nothing at all.

Over the years, I have talked to others of my generation who had abortions, and many say that they wish someone had told them "You don't have to do this, you know." It

might have made a difference.

I wonder about the counseling women get when they go to abortion clinics today: How often is a woman told that she is strong, that she does not have to give up hope for a good life if she continues her pregnancy?

To choose to have your baby — and raise it or give the child up for adoption — is a harder choice. Somehow it always seems easier to kill an in-

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convenient person than to have to deal with an unwanted "someone." But are we not here to do the things that are of value, the things that make our humanity worthwhile? I am sorry that I chose the easier path.

Corinne

When I was a young girl, I guess I was looking for a prince who would give me beautiful things, a happy home with children, and, most of all, a sense of being important and lovable. When I met a man who seemed to be this prince, I was flattered by his approval and willing to do anything to keep it. Soon, my self-image became only what I saw reflected in his eyes.

We married and I became pregnant. This seemed wonderful to me, but, as always, I looked to him to see how I "should" feel.

He saw the child as a hindrance to our life, an unwanted responsibility. He made it clear that if I didn't get a "safe, legal" abortion, our relationship would be in trouble. I had to choose between him and our child. I chose him.

When I was under the anaesthetic, I dreamed that I had been left in a white void where I was to remain forever, alone and without contact with another living soul.

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