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disagree."

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Idaho Common Sense™



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Role of abortion in United States?

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Last week's column on abortion generated interesting comments. As I suspected, most were either very pro abortion or very anti abortion. This kind of issue usually leaves few people undecided. With this in mind, I would like to continue the discussion in a more direct manner hoping to generate additional amiable debate of this very difficult and emotionally charged issue.

Roe v Wade is now 35 years old. Were the reasons for legalizing abortion correct, that every year tens of thousands of women were dying because of illegal abortions? Two substantial problems with that data negated its validity. The research was based on inaccurate assumptions and the data used was prior to the availability of antibiotics. The reality was, the year before Roe v Wade there were less than 150 maternal deaths from illegal abortions, not tens of thousands. Was legalizing abortion less about saving maternal lives and more about access to abortion on demand for unwanted pregnancies? Can we really justify 3000 abortions every day, 1.3 million abortions every year as necessary to save maternal lives? Is there any logic trading lives in this way? Furthermore, does abortion even fit with our American values? We consider it unacceptable to waterboard a terrorist for two minutes but acceptable to end the lives of 5 babies during the very same two minutes!

Those attempting to define when in pregnancy the fetus becomes a person explain their positions in very vague and artificial terms. They use phrases such as, what is the potentiality of the fetus, can a fetus reason, when is a fetus philosophically or legally significant,

when is the fetus of value to society, and when is the fetus actually a person. Defining when during pregnancy the fetus becomes deserving of our protection is still not resolved! Yet, abortions continue without this seemingly critical information! If those advocating abortion cannot determine or define when the fetus is deserving of society's protection, how then can they decide when abortion is not murder? I found no study defining a time during pregnancy when an identifiable change occurs such that one day a fetus is merely "products of conception" and the next day it is human and deserving of our protection? Wasn't the fetus human from the very beginning? Did it begin as something not human and transform into a human? The fetus does not just have the potential to be human, it is human. And, from the point in time it has its own unique genetic code all that occurs is ongoing, steady differentiation and growth, nothing more.

They have so much difficulty finding this indefinable point in time, when a fetus becomes a person, because those attempting to find it begin with the conclusion, that abortion is acceptable and therefore there must be a point in time before which abortion is not murder. Normally, research would begin with a question and then develop methods to answer that question. In the case of abortion, the research begins with an answer and then attempts to develop methods to justify that answer. What would the outcome of the research be if it began with the question, "Is there any time during pregnancy when you can objectively demonstrate this is not a unique human being; a time when,

from one day to the next, something so obvious occurs that from that point on it is human and deserving of our protection?" Again, the only time in pregnancy such a definable event occurs is when this new human has its own unique genetic code.

If abortion is not for saving maternal lives then what are the reasons for the multitude of abortions? Studies suggest there are two groups of reasons women have abortions. Roughly 7% are for rape, incest, health of the mother, or the baby has a "possible" health problem. The remaining 93% are for numerous socio-economic reasons. Is it possible our society uses abortion as a Band-Aid to cover up the real issues we wish to avoid? Are abortions more palatable than addressing the many socio-economic reasons they occur? One of the examples presented in last week's blogs was that of two young girls who died while using coat hangers for abortions. Does abortion solve any of the problems that led these young girls to that end? Or does abortion simply shield society from knowing about the problems. Abortion only deals with the results of the socio-economic problems, allowing the rest of us to avoid dealing with the issue. Abortion allows us to feel we are progressive, enlightened, and caring while we pretend the issues leading to abortion don't exist. We do not have to know about the problems, we can feel good, and nothing changes! Perhaps we should work to eliminate the problems leading to unwanted pregnancies rather eliminating the pregnancies?

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