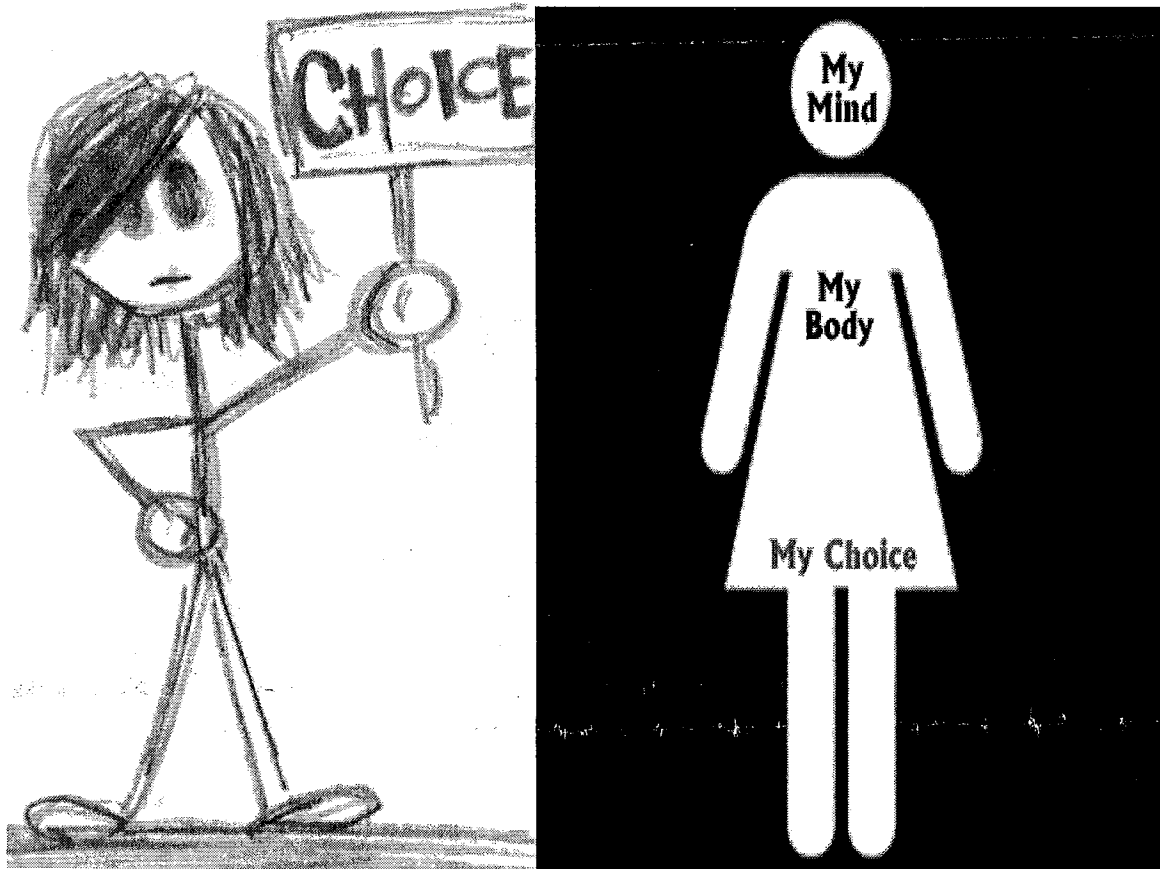


Parenting by choice **NOT** by **chance**



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NYCLU CONTEST

Reproductive Rights

Abortion

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Parenting by choice. Not by chance.

I am pro choice for abortion for many reasons. Pro life, says the fetus is a human being, and should not be murdered, but I have to disagree, I believe the mother of the fetus has enough knowledge of not only her body, but her child to know what to do with her child. 77 percent of Pro life leaders are male, but 100 percent of them will never get pregnant. That's the jackpot. People who believe in pro life don't seem to understand the financial and emotional needs for a child; a child should be loved and wanted. So now the real question is whether the government should have control over a woman's body and forbid her to get an abortion or to allow the safe legal procedure? There are two sides to every story.

Most arguments against granting women the right to abortion are based on religious and moral prohibitions, defending the purity of human life. Opponents of abortion rely on the argument that the fetus is a human being, a person from the moment of conception. Anti-abortionists proclaim that they are pro-life. However, they spend so much time establishing that the fetus is a person and therefore has a right to live that they forget about the mother's rights or simply ignore her existence. Pregnancy is often seen as the woman's fault. It is viewed that a young women just wakes up one morning, has a literature report due, pees and find out she is pregnant therefore, as a younger sibling would say, it's all your FAULT. Well it's not, there was a male involved who probably isn't ready for the responsibility, so as punishment the women must conceive and the man gets off free. But, there must be a choice.

Something has to be done. A recent study showed a large percentage of women who have to deal with unwanted pregnancies are teenagers. Pregnancy often has catastrophic effects on adolescents. They drop out of school, have nervous breakdowns, and even commit suicide. It is also unsafe for them to go through with a pregnancy. Dr. Henry Morgentaler writes: "Mortality among pregnant teenage girls is sixty percent higher than among adult women, one of the reasons being that the pregnancy depletes the resources that are needed for their own growth." Vice Presidential candidate Sarah Palin believes abortion should no longer be an option for women. I strongly disagree for two reasons: (A) because women should make their own choices,

and (B) I strongly disagree with her stand on not allowing a woman to have an abortion that has been a victim of a sex crime. This is not American; it's not freedom, freedom of choice. It's hypocritical to hold the position that abortion is wrong except in cases of rape or incest. Rape or not, a woman should be able to make her own decision because at the end of the day, it's the woman being the mom and Dad.

My personal belief is that each woman should have a right to decide whether she wants to terminate an unwanted pregnancy. For reasons of women's right to self-determination, protection of their health, adequate care of children which are born and in order to prevent child abuse and mental disease, easy access to abortion is a must. Most abortions occur because contraception failed, because of a rape or because of a serious medical condition of the mother which could lead to her death. In these situations abortion is often the only way that prevents the birth of an unwanted child or saves a mothers life.

I am pro choice because I see the positive impact that the pro choice movement has had in the United States. Women go to college at the same rates as men. We can define ourselves as something other than mothers, or as mothers *and* something else. Poverty has been cut in half since Roe gave women the right to control their own reproduction. Men can be nurturing too, and are expected to take part in raising their children. Families can be planned. Men have greater choices in their occupations since they aren't required to be the sole bread-winner. More people have access to education. Women have more power to escape abusive relationships or bad jobs. Parents of both sexes will spend more time with their kids than ever before. Pro choice is the magnificent choice, improving the life one person at a time. Besides... abortion should be a personal decision not a legal debate.