



So What About Rape or Incest?

The tiny percentage of pregnancies which are the result of rape or incest have been used as justification for legalized abortion. Now that each state can set the parameters for abortion within their borders, many people will be asking, "So what about rape and incest?" As I am both post-abortive, and a rape survivor, I hope that will give me credibility to weigh in on the discussion.

In my 20+ years as a pro-life speaker, I found that very often the person who raises the "what about rape or incest?" question with me is a man. So my first step has always been to acknowledge with respect, what he wants is to protect the victim from further trauma. I find this glorious masculine instinct so admirable! There are few things that seem as horrifying to a man as the helplessness of sexual assault. He imagines the rape survivor reliving the assault several times a day, literally for the child's entire life. To save her from that, he wants to protect her by erasing every reminder of what happened. I always take the time to honor that protective instinct -- men who stand between us and harm are harder to find than when I was growing up.

My second step is to point out that abortion-after-rape often does the **opposite** of what he is trying to achieve. Rather than help her overcome the initial trauma, abortion exacerbates it. There are only a few studies looking at rape-survivors-who-carry versus rape-survivors-who-abort -- but even the limited evidence indicates that survivors-who-carry (whether they parent or place for adoption) overcome their original trauma much faster than the survivors who abort, while survivors-who-abort continue to see themselves as victims much longer.

There is another characteristic in the research which really stood out: Survivors-who-abort expressed a sense that they had victimized someone equally as innocent and helpless as they were. By contrast, survivors-who-carry often see the birth of the child as a triumph over their rapist. They say things that sound like, "He tried to break me, but he couldn't. LIFE came out of my body." Even in those circumstances, the miracle of birth (a woman's "superpower") is a testament to HOPE. A rape survivor who aborts inspires our pity, but a rape survivor who chooses life is the epitome of a strong, heroic woman and deserves our admiration.

Most people have a double standard when it comes to "involuntary pregnancy." If you can be honest with yourself, I can prove it.

A woman I knew was in a relationship for a few years, approaching 30 but her partner just "wasn't ready" to take the next step. She believed if she got pregnant "accidentally," he would want to become a family. So she stopped taking birth control without telling him. And within a few months, she got pregnant. (Not an uncommon story -- ask around.)

He was far from overjoyed that he going to be a dad, and she was shocked to



discover he had already "moved on" to someone else. They broke up instead.

He assumed she would abort, and advocated for it. But she wanted that baby -- biological clock, after all. So she gave birth to a baby boy, hoping he would "come around." But he didn't. He in fact resisted contributing financially, so she took him to court. As you would expect, the court ruled against him and he will be paying support until his child is 18. But from his perspective, her deception had forced him into an "involuntary pregnancy."

In the above situation, the law and society side with the mom. After all, it's not the BABY'S fault his parents were irresponsible narcissists. Sure, the child came into being under less than ideal circumstances, but as a society, that doesn't matter, both parents have to provide for him financially. *Because its not the baby's fault.*

You see the double-standard, right? If HER "involuntary pregnancy" is the result of physical violence (rape) or emotional manipulation (incest), then the socially-approved position is the baby can be discarded as bio-waste. But if HE was emotionally manipulated, or even outright deceived about paternity, society's position is "too bad."

Those are serious mental gymnastics. We'd rather society pursued the Ideal: Act responsibly, recognizing everyone can avoid creating babies they're not prepared to care for — by practicing sexual self-control!

But to be honest, my best response to "what about rape and incest?" is always to ask this question.

If you found out today that your birth father was a rapist, does that mean your life has no value and you should never have lived?

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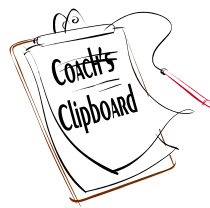
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COACH'S CORNER

With the right to restrict or ban abortion returned to the states, parents have a great opportunity to discuss the issues surrounding it. As always, keep in mind the purpose is to help your teen acquire skills — not insist that your child think like you think. Your objective is for them to be able to defend their beliefs **when you're not there.**

If you haven't discussed the subject of abortion before, tread softly. There is a possibility you may learn your child has participated in an abortion decision. Keeping the relationship intact is essential if you want to be able to have influence.

Start with, "What do you know about it?" The law in your state, the story of *Roe v Wade*, any data they may have heard. If you aren't up-to-speed yourself, we suggest reading the *Dobbs* decision — it's an excellent history of how we got here.

Then ask "what would you want MY reaction to be if you needed to talk about a pregnancy?" This will help you gauge how they perceive your response to things. (Don't get off track, their perception is valid as far as their experience.)

Your goal is a frank discussion about establishing values, resisting the pressure they might be feeling to conform to the viewpoint of their peers, and how to respond to someone whose view is different from their own. As much as is possible, be patient while they try to formulate answers. Most young people today are told WHAT to think, not HOW to reason, so be patient, be quiet and be open to wherever they are.

When your viewpoints differ, ask questions like, "what is that based on?" or "how did you come to that belief?" Try to enjoy the process, Coach, **this is just Spring Training** — so there is time to get their skills refined before they get to the Show!

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