

*Feminists Choosing Life of New York* is a pro-life/pro-woman organization that seeks to open minds to its philosophy of pro-life feminism, the belief that all humans, by virtue of innate human dignity have a right to live without violence from conception to natural death. We are non-sectarian and non-partisan.

Just like the pro-choice women here today, FCL also has a deep passion for women. We share the same concerns about the inequalities we see and experience in our society. We have a deep love of our families and friends and we work tirelessly for greater opportunities for women. We recognize the same problems for women facing an unplanned pregnancy – lack of emotional and financial support, difficulties for pregnant or parenting students, fear and uncertainty about the future. The difference is in the solutions to these challenges. The pro-choice view is that legalized abortion is the answer to the inequities women face. We reject the belief that women must sacrifice their children in order to be successful in our country. In other words, we do not agree that the option to be “un-pregnant” provides women with equality to men. Equality will be achieved when we embrace the life bearing potential of a woman and provide her with the support, opportunity, and non-violent resources she needs to be successful. Pro-life feminists adhere to the same principles of non-discrimination, justice and non-violence that our suffrage and abolitionist foremothers insisted on and, make no mistake, the business of abortion discriminates is unjust and darkly violent. The so-called necessity for abortion is stark proof that the needs of women, as the child bearers of our species are not being met.

The Guttmacher Institute cites two main reasons women give for seeking abortions. The first is lack of financial resources and the second is lack of emotional support. While legalized abortion offers a quick fix for this lack of resources, it does nothing to address the root causes and often leaves women broken and dysfunctional. Abortion has far reaching, often undisclosed consequences for women. When a woman is counseled about her “choice”, she is often rushed into her decision being coerced by her partner, family, or a clinic fearful of losing her business. A woman who is considering abortion is often is not educated on the developmental stage of her baby and she is rarely told that if she has an abortion, she is at risk for Post Abortive Syndrome (also known at Post

Traumatic Stress Disorder) and other long term emotional and physical complications. Without knowledge of possible ramifications, is she truly able to make the best choice for herself? We don't think so.

And if we believe ourselves to be a nation that fights for the human rights of all world citizens, we must for a moment think about the child in the womb and ask ourselves where we draw the line on who is worthy of human rights and who is not. Are women worthy of basic human rights? Anti-suffragists, those who would have denied women the vote, would have said no. Are people of color worthy of equal rights with whites? Anti-abolitionists, people who supported slavery, would have said no. Do the sick and the weak and the poor deserve equal rights with those who are well? Margaret Sanger, founder of Planned Parenthood said they are not and advocated the use of birth control and forced sterilization to limit those who were "unfit".

In our ever growing understanding of what it means to be human, we must again expand the umbrella of human rights to include the children in the womb.