



HUMAN LIFE INTERNATIONAL'S

# PRO-LIFE TALKING POINTS

## Exceptions Is Abortion Ever Permissible?

**1. Hard cases make bad law:** An old legal saying goes, “Hard cases make bad law,” because a good arguer can justify the overturning of any principle when circumstances are difficult enough. Pro-abortion groups have used the “hard cases” to obtain a negation of the American tradition of valuing individual life and have succeeded in imposing abortion-on-demand in the United States. Though only a tiny proportion of abortions in this and most other countries are due to hard cases—to save the life or health of the mother, rape, incest, and fetal deformities—pro-abortion groups portray these reasons as the norm. In fact, the vast majority of abortions are sought for social and economic reasons. Under the 1973 Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*, abortion-on-demand is legally permitted throughout all nine months of pregnancy.

**2. The hard cases are very rare:** Based on statistics provided by medical journals and government surveys, we find that the hard cases are much rarer than most people believe. In the United States, approximately 5,200 abortions are performed every year with the stated justification of saving the life or health of the mother, or about 0.36% (1 out of 278) of all abortions; approximately 1,300 abortions performed every year for rape and incest, or about 0.09% (1 out of 1,111) of all abortions; and there are about 3,470 abortions performed every year for fetal birth defects (eugenics), or about 0.24% (1 out of 417) of all abortions. Overall, there are about 9,970 abortions performed every year for all of the hard cases combined, or about 0.69% (1 out of every 145) of all abortions.\* Therefore, 99.31% of all abortions are performed for social or economic

reasons, i.e. “to save the mother’s lifestyle” or to please people close to her such as parents, husband or boyfriend. These numbers are confirmed by a survey of more than 120,000 aborting women performed by the states of Louisiana, Nebraska and Utah during the years 1996 to 2004. The combined studies showed that only 0.84% of women obtained abortions for all of the hard cases combined.

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*“[T]he life-of-the-mother argument surfaces in every debate concerning abortion. The fact of the matter is that abortion as a necessity to save the life of the mother is so rare as to be non-existent.” – former US Surgeon General C. Everett Koop.*

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**3. Abortion is not needed to save the life or health of the mother:** Because of advances in medicine, there are currently no maternal medical conditions for which abortion is necessary to cure or alleviate. Even leading pro-abortionists have recognized this fact for decades. A favorite of Planned Parenthood, Dr. Alan Guttmacher did more to promote and spread abortion-on-demand throughout the world than any other individual. Yet as long ago as 1967, he commented, “Today it is possible for almost any patient to be brought through pregnancy alive, unless she suffers from a fatal disease such as cancer or leukemia, and if so, abortion would

be unlikely to prolong, much less save the life.” Former Surgeon General of the United States Dr. C. Everett Koop said that “the life-of-the-mother argument surfaces in every debate concerning abortion. The fact of the matter is that abortion as a necessity to save the life of the mother is so rare as to be non-existent.”

#### 4. More violence is not the proper response to rape or incest:

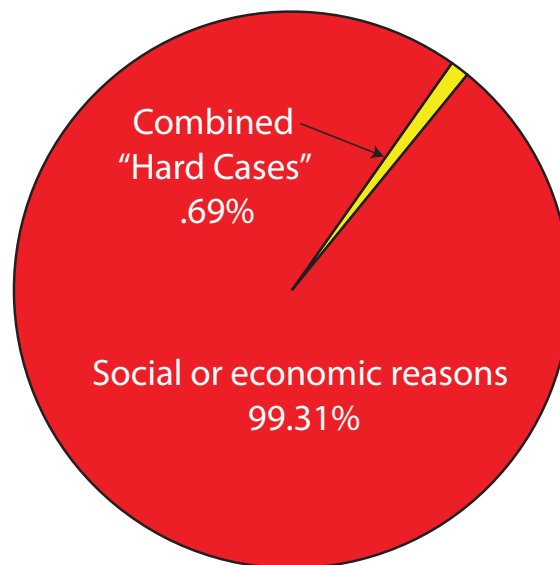
These are appalling cases, but abortion simply inflicts another level of violence on the innocent child conceived by the act and psychologically on the woman who was the victim of the rape or incest. Typically, a woman who is a victim of rape or incest is pressured into aborting, when instead she needs the support and encouragement of those around her. Additionally, abortion is the ideal cover-up for incest. HLI’s [www.abortionviolence.com](http://www.abortionviolence.com) shows many instances of molesters taking underage girls to abortion clinics, almost all of whom have a “no questions asked” policy, leaving the molester free to commit his crimes again and again. Planned Parenthood’s willingness to ignore law and justice in order to forward abortion by showing ostensibly underage and pregnant girls how to circumvent the law is documented in videos at [www.liveaction.org](http://www.liveaction.org).

#### 5. Eugenics cannot justify killing imperfect people:

The abortion of preborn children who are handicapped is nothing more than eugenics, discrimination of the most base kind. Those who abort a handicapped preborn child are saying by their actions that a handicapped baby has less of a right to live than a perfect baby. We do not yet murder children and adults because they are handicapped in some way. A truly humane society would not kill its weakest members, but love them and

support them, even if their handicaps are incompatible with life. In fact, everyone has a fatal handicap that will lead to death one day. Even if a baby will die shortly after she is born, what is a more civilized response — to hold and love her in the short time she has on this earth, or cut her apart with a vacuum cutterage machine? It is easy to love the perfect; but how much we are willing to give to the imperfect is the true measure of love.

Reasons Given For Having Abortions:



6. **Which child should live:** We might examine two newborn babies lying side by side—one conceived within a loving marriage and one conceived as the result of a brutal rape—and then ask which should be considered more human and therefore worthy of life.

\* Louisiana State Center for Health Statistics, *Louisiana Vital Statistics Report* annual reports, 1996-2000 and 1997-2001; Nebraska Health and Human Services System, “Nebraska 2001 Statistical Report of Abortions,” March 2002; Utah Department of Health, *Utah’s Vital Statistics: Abortions*, annual reports, 1996-2003.

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