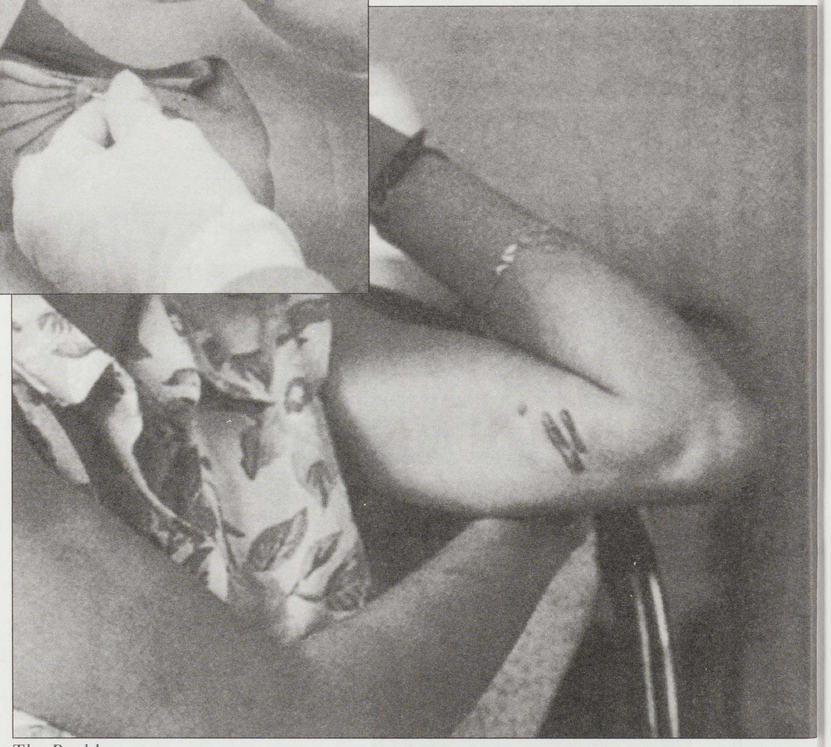
Norplant loses it's shine; lawsuit filed

The much acclaimed birth control method, Norplant, is not the wondrous boon touted in the press several years ago.

Norplant, which works when six matchstick-like capsules are implanted under the skin of the upper arm, was supposed to replace having to take daily birth control pills for five years. Instead, side effects are wracking its users, insertion and removal have become problems, and there is the inevitable class-action lawsuit against Wyeth-Ayerst, the manufacturer of the device.

The Promise

The Process



The Problem

Norplant is an abortifacient and was so eagerly accepted that judges were sentencing women who had abused their children to having the implants placed.

Users have complained of constant bleeding, headaches, nausea, dizziness, acne, and weight gain.

But doctors were also implanting the capsules too deep or at an angle instead of directly under the skin. Bent capsules were being discovered when women sought to have them removed. More than 28,000 U.S. doctors were allegedly "trained" to insert the devices.

Many doctors were not paying attention to the proper removal techniques or were having extreme difficulty removing the improperly implanted Norplant. What was supposed to be a 15-20 minute procedure under local anesthesia often turned into an hour-long hunt-and-peck for the capsules that made "hamburger" of the surrounding tissue. Swelling often made continuing the hunt impossible.

Jewel Klein, the Chicago attorney behind the lawsuit against Wyeth-Ayerst, said that women need to be informed of the problems with Norplant before the device is implanted.

The problems, predicted by many in the pro-life movement before it was widely introduced, were ignored in the mainstream press until recently. ■

Two teens are arrested and convicted for being pro-life

by Rick Catizone

Pittsburgh, PA—On July 5, Jason Catizone and Jamie Tellier were found guilty of disorderly conduct and obstructing a public thoroughfare. Although Jamie has had 80 arrests for her pro-life activity, this is the first conviction.

Catizone and Tellier had been picketing Women's Health Services for about six months, along with other pro-lifers. Their arrest took place before the enactment of the FACE bill. On the day of their arrests, both Catizone and Tellier had been on the public sidewalk for an hour-and-a-half or longer. Tellier's mother, Laura, had also been in the same area. When Laura took a position about four feet from the entrance to the clinic, a police officer ordered her off the sidewalk and behind the barricade.

The police have a set of barricades that run about 20 or 30 feet at the edge of the sidewalk. According to the police, all pro-life people have to stand in the street, behind the barricade. All of the 12-foot sidewalk is open to all others to pass through.

Catizone was arrested for refusing to move from a public sidewalk and take a position behind the barricade. Catizone and Tellier went over to ask why Laura was being arrested. Catizone and Jamie Tellier then stayed at the spot where Laura had been arrested. When the police came back from the wagon, they told both teens to get behind the barricades.

After questioning why they had to move from a public sidewalk, they received no answer. Refusing to move, the two teens were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct, resisting arrest (because they went limp), blocking a public thoroughfare, and criminal conspiracy. At the court hearing the criminal conspiracy and resisting arrest charges were dropped. Although it was clearly shown that the teens did not "make passage impossible" (or even inconvenient) on a 12-foot sidewalk, they were found guilty.

They also were found guilty of disorderly conduct although the officer testified that the teens were at no time disrespectful in word or action other than refusing to move behind the barricade. The prosecuting attorney made a case that the teens' refusal to go behind the barricades broke the police "rules" for protesting at the clinic and that the teens' arrest had drawn people, and caused cars to slow down to see what was happening. The attorney then proceeded to state that the teens had made a hazardous situation.

While the defending attorney, Tom Charles, made every effort to show that it was in fact the number of police that drew the attention, and that these two teens standing in a space perhaps three-by-three feet did in no way render the 12-foot sidewalk impassable, the judge apparently disagreed. Even testimony by the teens that there is a homeless person who is permitted to stand in one spot for long periods of time within the "restricted area" had no effect.

The teens did not stand in the doorway entrance, or block it in any fashion. They prevented no one from entering the clinic. The sidewalks in front of this abortion mill are now open to all but pro-lifers. ■

Virginia clinic burns, reopens

Falls Church, VA — Commonwealth Women's Clinic suffered $10,000 in damage from an allegedly arson-caused fire on the same day that an abortionist and his bodyguards were shot in Pensacola, Florida.

Authorities say there is no particular evidence linking the two incidents.

The Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) has assigned about 20 men to the case, according to Special Agent Patrick Hines.

The fire was caused by what investigators described as a "gasoline-powered device."

The damage was not enough to close the clinic.

Though the abortuary's head nurse, Missy Dixon, insisted, "No one has been intimidated by this," Wayne Codding, operations director for the clinic said, "This is really scary stuff." ■

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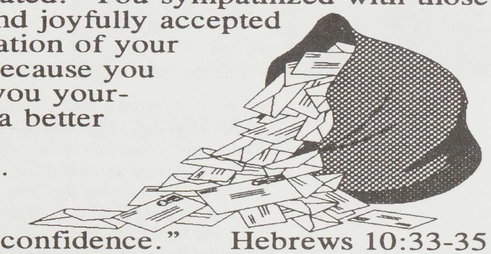

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