Aborted women — victims or perpetrators

by Sarah H. Leslie

With the advent of RU-486 and the beginning of clinical trials across the country, it behooves us to re-think the "woman as victim" mentality of the abortion debates.

The year was 1984. "It's a dirty, nasty business," stated a woman at a Republican convention. She clenched her fists, raising her voice in righteous rage: "No decent person should ever become involved in this at any level. It is a dirty, filthy, horrible, brutal, nasty and vicious business! And women are its victims!"

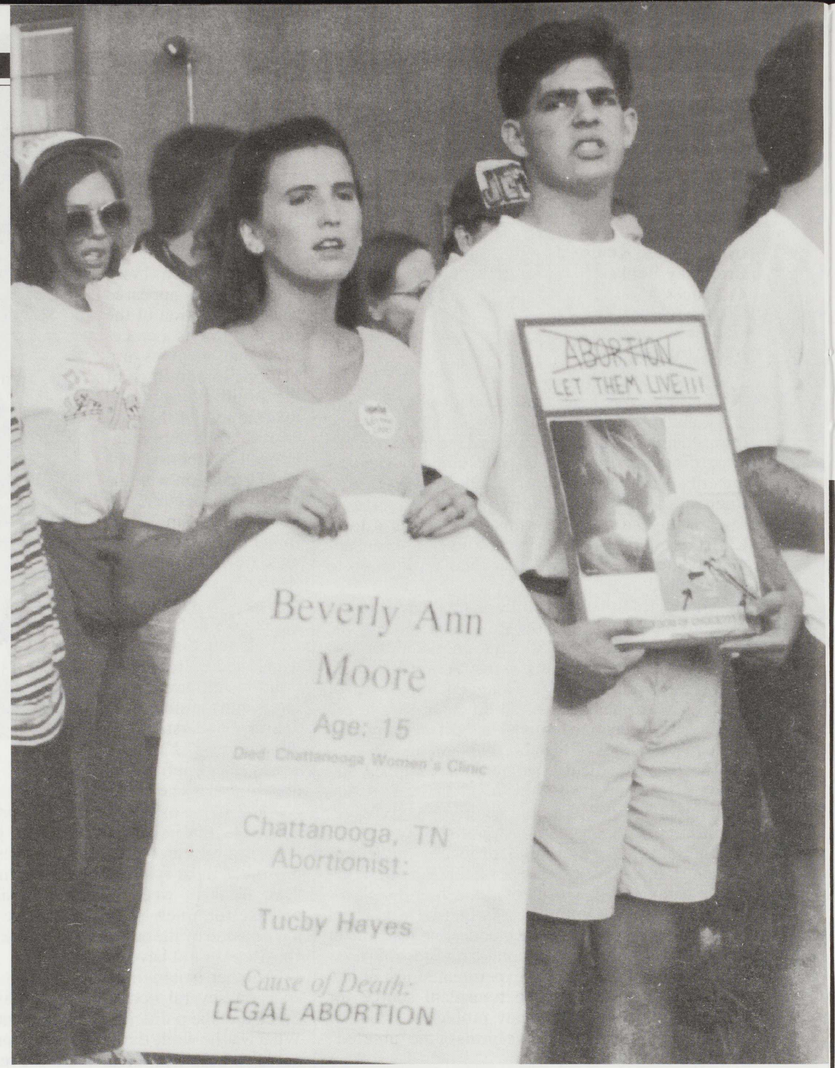
This woman, a close friend of mine, had helped the Des Moines-based founder of Women Exploited By Abortion (WEBA) polish her story, spiff up her ideology and get her organization off the ground. Behind the scenes I worked with my friend, tacitly agreeing with the victim status of women.

After all, my first experience with abortion was in 1970 when a close friend in high school underwent an abortion. Her experience was a classic story of betrayal. When her parents discovered she was pregnant they flew her out to New York at the advice of a family physician.

My friend was never told exactly how she was suddenly going to become unpregnant and was upbeat before the trip. She came back with a horror story: dirty, filthy conditions; rats and bugs crawling all around, babies standing around in jars; blood soaking everything; the horrible pain of an induced labor, and giving birth to her own dead baby. This was a so-called "safe" and "legal" abortion! Had she been told the truth she would have never consented to this. For six months she cried to me over the phone every day after school.

By the year 1984 abortion was entrenched in this country, and my friend's speech before the political convention was typical of the growing evangelical outcry against abortion. By this time the abortion industry was swallowing up over a million unborn babies a year, aggressively marketing its services in clinics sprouting up everywhere. Focusing on the victimhood of women seemed like a good idea.

The feminists had started it. Women were victims (victims of a patriarchal culture that oppressed them in every way conceivable, from restrictive fashions to employment discrimination. So, it seemed good to throw it back in their face and jump on their own victimization bandwagon to assert that women were also the victims of abortion.



HORROR STORIES BEGAN EMERGING. IT WASN'T JUST THE BABIES THAT WERE BEING BUTCHERED. IT WAS THE WOMEN, TOO.

The truth about victimization

It is an indisputable fact that women are exploited by the abortion industry. Medical facts about the life of the fetus and potential risks to the mother are glossed over or grossly ignored. The rhetoric is slick, the facts are slim. The baby is just a "blob of tissue."

Women of all childbearing ages, some still children, are persuaded, cajoled, threatened, or "educated" to undergo this catch-all solution to the sexual revolution mess. For some women "choice" doesn't seem to be an option. Picketers outside abortion mills have noted the frequency of women who are coerced or dragged into the clinics by mother or boyfriend.

As the abortion culture wars began escalating in the mid-80's, crisis pregnancy centers began sprouting up across the country to offer these women another alternative. Horror stories began emerging. It wasn't just the babies that were being butchered. It was the women, too. Stories of bodies battered by ruthless medical incompetents and lives shattered because of infertility and emotional pain began bubbling to the surface. Some of these stories captured national attention by right-to-life groups anxious to expose the brutality of abortion. The small victims of abortion couldn't speak of their wounds. But their mothers could talk!

The new theology of victimization

In the evangelical Church, subtly at first, the idea of woman as victim took hold. Every woman who had an abortion was perceived as less guilty than the abortion doctor. This had two immediate effects. It vilified the abortionist beyond human redemption. Second, it exonerated the woman from real guilt because she was now the victim. In classic victimhood sense (as we have now begun to recognize in our culture) the woman was excused because of inconvenient circumstances, environment, poverty, or even a bad boyfriend.

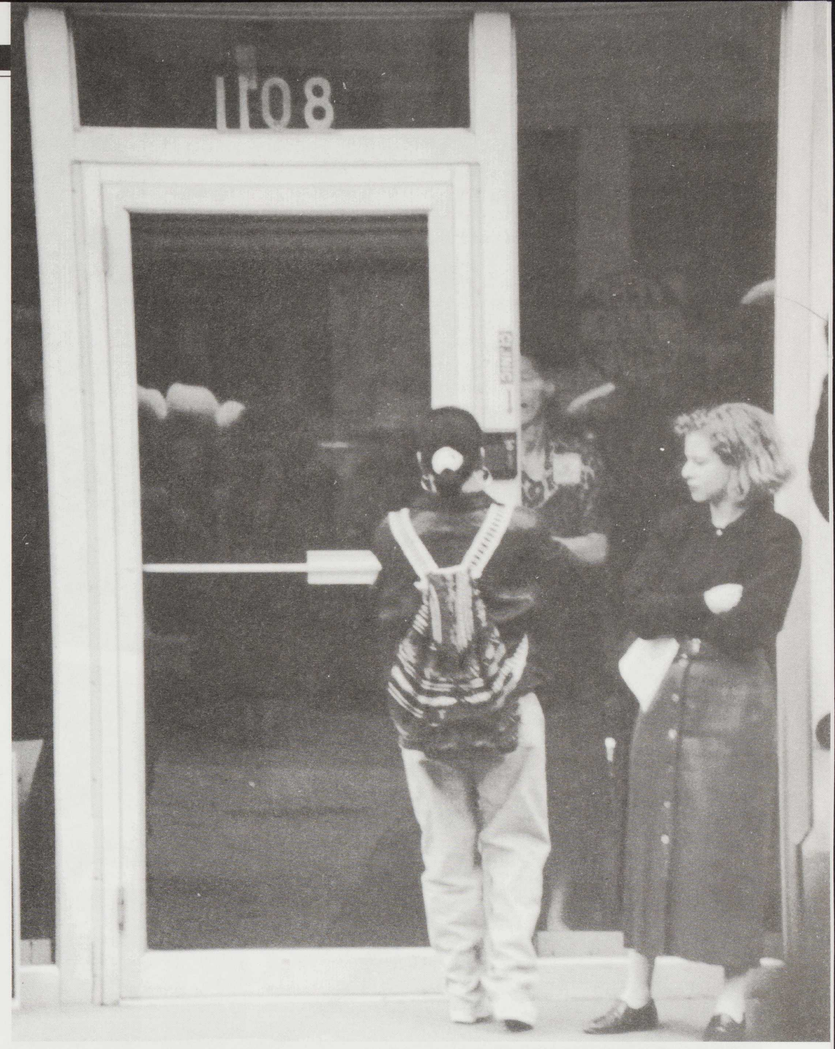
It became impolitic amongst us to consider that the woman who seeks out, contracts for, and submits herself for the sacrifice of her baby is as guilty as the abortionist.

Further, the original act of sin that resulted in pregnancy was virtually ignored! The Church, in its haste to reach out loving arms and forgive the woman, had begun to neglect the first, most necessary human component of true redemption and forgiveness: repentance and confession.

Why did the Church soft-peddle sin? Perhaps it was the erroneous (and theologically unsound) belief that women are the weaker, gentler sex and therefore less prone to sin. Perhaps it was the Church's desire to mainstream itself, not be so "radical" or counter to the culture. Perhaps it could be attributed to the Church's pappy stance on sexual sin. Adultery, fornication and divorce became commonplace in the Church in the 80's. These sins began to be called "sexual indiscretions" or "mistakes," and traditional Church discipline in these matters was abandoned or neglected.

In its wake the Church eagerly latched on to a secular method of doling out love and grace (the pop culture's self-esteem movement. The influence of modern psychology on the Church contributed directly to the rising popularity of the new doctrine of victimhood. Jim Owen's book, *Christian Psychology's War On God's Word: The Victimization of the Believer*, explains it well:

> *[Christian psychology] emphasizes man-as-victim rather than man-as-sinner. Such a view radically challenges the biblical doctrines of man's absolute culpability before the cross, the supremacy of the Holy Spirit in the*

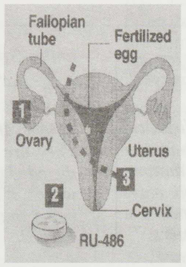
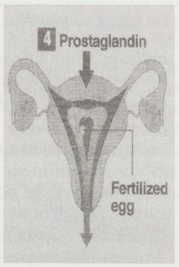


IT BECAME IMPOLITIC AMONGST US TO CONSIDER THAT THE WOMAN WHO SEEKS OUT, CONTRACTS FOR, AND SUBMITS HERSELF FOR THE SACRIFICE OF HER BABY IS AS GUILTY AS THE ABORTIONIST.

1. A woman's ovaries produce progesterone, a hormone that is necessary for fertilized eggs to implant and develop in the uterus.

2. A woman wishing to end a pregnancy must take RU-486 within nine weeks of her last menstrual period.

3. The drug acts to block the effects of progesterone, causing the uterus to reject implantation of the fertilized egg. The body reacts as if the woman isn't pregnant.



4. The woman takes another hormone, prostaglandin, within two days, which causes the cervix to soften and dilate, and the uterus to contract, expelling the egg.