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as I see it;
trying not to
offend
those who will
disagree."

The truth as I see it®



Craig L. Bosley, MD

Roe v Wade Did we get what we wanted?

February 4, 2013

Recently, parents successfully sued for “wrongful birth” because their child was born with Down syndrome, claiming if it had been accurately diagnosed early in the pregnancy, they would have chosen abortion.

With Roe v Wade, did well-meaning people start us down an unintended path to a child being worthy of birth only if the parents find him or her desirable? Are we heading toward designer babies, babies who come with guarantees of perfection? Was this the intent of those supporting Roe v Wade?

Are we using Row v Wade to cross lines we perhaps should not cross, such as what to do with our ability to determine the sex of the baby at five to seven weeks of gestation? I assumed parents would want to know this to decorate their baby’s room. I was wrong. Instead, physicians in New York advertise availability of sex-selective abortions. Is this what the Supreme Court intended when it decided women had the constitutional right to abortion?

Did the Supreme Court or we anticipate the impact of what it approved in 1973? According to the Guttmacher Institute, we now abort 22% of all pregnancies, performing 1.2 million abortions in 2008 and more than 50 million abortions since Roe v Wade. Is this what the Constitution supports? Is this what the Supreme Court intended? Is this what we wanted?

The most common reasons for abortion are discouraging. What I

anticipated would be heart-wrenching stories were not. Instead, Guttmacher reports the primary reasons women have abortions are because they do not want the responsibility of a baby, they worry that a baby will cost too much, they fear a child will interfere with work or school, or they don’t want to be a single parent. And now? It’s the wrong sex.

The Supreme Court used the words “before viability” to define when we could legally abort a baby. Yet, more than 30 years later, no one has adequately defined with any degree of certainty what that is or when it occurs. Further, Roe v Wade says the baby does not have “personhood” until some undefined point in gestation and prior to “personhood” abortion is legal. Do we believe this? Or, do we use words like “viability” and “personhood” to assuage concerns about what we are doing?

Though I know some will disagree, doesn’t “it” have “personhood” from conception; isn’t “it” “viable” from conception; isn’t “it” a “human being” from conception? Isn’t life just a continuum from conception to death? Isn’t death from old age or abortion just a question of timing rather than personhood or viability?

Throughout the ages, societies have determined when killing is acceptable. They developed their own mores and ethics about killing, some even believing infanticide was perfectly acceptable.

Why do we approach abortion differently in our society? Why do we try to define the baby in such a way that it is somehow not a baby, not yet human? Wouldn’t it be healthier if we dealt with these issues up front, rather than veiling them in words like “personhood” and “viability?” Are the reasons Guttmacher lists for why we abort babies the reasons we anticipated with Roe v Wade? Do we really want to abort a baby simply because he or she is the wrong sex, because he or she interferes with our plans, because he or she might cost too much?

I know I cannot understand what women face in this situation. Moreover, it is unfair that women too often face this alone, the man abdicating his responsibility, leaving the woman alone to decide her future. Nevertheless, I am unsure if we can ever remove the inequities of life with legislation. And I am equally unsure if abortion on demand is the answer to this particular unfairness women face.

Further, if we are to the point of aborting babies simply because they are the wrong sex, will there ever be a line we won’t cross? Did we really get what we wanted?

Dr. Bosley's book titled The Truth as I See It®, Idaho Common Sense® is hardcover, 374 pages, \$24.95 – available at www.craigbosley.com. To contact him directly, you can email him at craig@craigbosley.com. His columns are available at www.craigbosley.com.