

CALIFORNIA RIGHT TO LIFE EDUCATION FUND

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Her Body, Their Baby A Father's Perspective

Excerpts from article By [Garrett Kell](#)

Abortion is not just about a mother's choice. It is also about a father's responsibility.

In the summer of 1998, a friend and I spent an evening together. A few weeks later she told me she was pregnant, and it was mine. Neither of us expected it, and neither of us felt ready to raise a child together. We were not in love and thought it would be better to go our separate ways with a clean slate. So we chose to have an abortion.

We gathered \$400 from a friend and went to a clinic that prescribed us a pill. We drove to someone's empty home, where we would spend the night. I got her a glass of water to take the pill. I held her hand while she cramped and cried. I was there as we ended the life of our unborn child.

Some choices leave scars. Our abortion was one of those choices. In the years since our decision, I've often reflected on what happened that summer. It has changed me. It has given me more compassion toward those who face the fear of an unplanned pregnancy.

God has brought healing and shown forgiveness that I do not deserve. My experience with the abortion is one reason I often speak about the issue—even when I'm asked to stop speaking about it.

It is her body

In recent days, I have had conversations with several women who have challenged me to remain silent about abortion. I've been told, "It is a woman's body; she has the right to choose what to do with it," and, "You're a man; you have no right to tell a woman what to do with her body."

I am sensitive to their request. A woman's body is given to her as a gift from God. It should never be

touched in ways she does not permit. A man does not have the right to force her to use her body against her will. Her body is hers and that must be respected.

No man can truly understand the joys of pregnancy or the fears of an unexpected pregnancy. Men have their own related hopes and sorrows, but there is a unique way a woman hopes for her womb to be filled with life. There is also a unique sorrow women know when that life ends through miscarriage or the choice of abortion. As Proverbs 14:10 says, "Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy."

It's not only her body

Yet, the fact that it is a woman's body does not capture the whole truth. When a woman becomes pregnant, her body is not solely hers any longer. It also belongs to her child. In the miracle of motherhood, a living human being is conceived within her body and then attaches to the wall of her womb. It is within her, yet distinct from her. It is in her body, but it is not her body.

What is growing within her is not merely a tumor or clump of cells that has the potential to be a baby. It is a baby. Some may push back on this, but it is scientifically dishonest to do so. The child in the womb has unique DNA, unique blood type, and every quality that makes us distinctly human. What is in her is a unique, living human being. The child has a [detectable heartbeat](#) between 5-6 weeks.

We all know the baby is a living being. If we found on Mars what we find in the womb of a mother, we would certainly say we found life. And we all know it is a human. It can be scientifically proven that 100 percent of the time nothing other than a human will come out during birth. At the moment of conception, a living human begins to take up residency inside his or her mother.

God's wonderful design is for a child to be united to his or her mother and receive protected housing as they grow and nourishment as they develop. This sacrificial love is part of what it means to be a mother. Any of us who are reading these words have known this divinely designed care, regardless of our birth circumstances. The mother's body is her body, but it is not only her body. Her body has become the home to another distinct human.

It's not only her baby

This is where a father's responsibility must be highlighted. While the woman's body is her body, it is not only her baby. It is their baby; regardless of whether they planned to have a child together or not; regardless of whether the father desires to be responsible for his choices or not. This is true of every pregnancy, including the one I chose to take part in ending. When we had the abortion, it wasn't my body, but it was my baby.

Please hold back any desire to roll your eyes here. There are few things more precious than a father's love. This is one of the reasons the world has fallen in love with Jack and Randall from the hit show [This Is Us](#). There's something in us that wants fathers like Jack and Randall; or if we are fathers, we want to be like them. This is also why the [Internet celebrated the father](#) who charged a disgraced doctor who sexually assaulted his three daughters. The importance of fathers resonates within us all. Those who had wonderful fathers celebrate them and those who did not know the ache that is left behind.

Abortion is not just about a mother's choice. It is also about a father's responsibility. Perpetuating the lie that men need to stay out of the discussion about abortion—because it is a woman's body—is not only untrue, it is catastrophic for generations to come. What we need is a generation of young men who honor ladies by helping them protect the precious gift of their sexuality as it was intended to be.

We need a generation of young men who will not treat women like objects, but honor them with decency and respect. We need a generation of young men who will not walk away when they get a woman pregnant or pressure a woman to end their child's life. We need a generation of men who will

love their unborn children and go the utmost lengths to encourage the mother to have their baby. They must be willing to help raise the child or place the child for adoption.

We also need a generation of women who will encourage men to take responsibility and show the sacrificial love and empathy that ought to mark men, not push them out of the conversation about abortion.

Though abortion uniquely affects women, it is not only about women. It is also about the child in her womb, and the child's father. Because in the end it is her body; but it is their baby.

Update on California Institute for Regenerative Medicine

Remember back in 2004, California voters were asked to approve Prop 71, a \$3 billion ballot initiative (\$6 billion with interest) for the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine for stem cell research? California voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 71.

The marketing for this proposition proclaimed that stem cells, especially human embryonic stem cells, were the key to unlock the secrets of human biology, and it would all happen sooner rather than later, if only funding were available. Hollywood stars enthusiastically backed the ballot initiative. Quadriplegic Christopher Reeves told voters in an advertisement, "Stem cells have already cured paralysis in animals. Stem cells are the future of medicine." Parkinson's victim Michael J. Fox said: "Vote yes on 71, and save the life of someone you love." California voters "drank the kool-aid" and funded the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM.)

Fourteen years later we are now in 2018 and the CIRM (aka California taxpayers) has received its first royalties – a check for US \$190,345.87 – a 0.00006% return on investment. And that's not for a cure, by the way. It's for a drug which has only passed a Phase I clinical trial. Clearly, California voters were sold a bill of goods that hasn't delivered.

Not even the staff of the controversial CIRM are calling press conferences relating to the return on investment for California taxpayers' \$3 billion investment. Maria Millan, CIRM's President and CEO, says the amount of the payment is not the most significant part of this milestone – after all, CIRM has invested more than \$2.5 billion in stem cell research since 2004. She says, "The fact that we are starting to see a return on the investment is important and reflects some of the many benefits CIRM brings to the state."

On the other side, CIRM's critics were scathing. John M. Simpson, of Consumer Watchdog, said, "Once again it's clear that Proposition 71 was oversold by its sponsors. Despite campaign hype, it's only now that we are seeing the first royalty payment and a rather modest one at that."

Bernard Munos, a senior fellow at FasterCures, told California Stem Cell Report, an invaluable source of information on the agency: "The \$200,000 check from City of Hope should be acknowledged, but it only represents 0.02% of the \$1.1 billion in royalties that were promised to California taxpayers -- and does not even cover the annual salary of CIRM's part-time vice chairman."

And Marcy Darnovsky, executive director of the Center for Genetics and Society, told California Stem Cell Report: "Many Californians voted to establish CIRM because they believed the promises that its backers were making: that we'd soon see revolutionary medical breakthroughs, that our state would get back a billion dollars or more in royalties, that the agency would be run by an 'independent' board. Almost a decade and a half later, none of that has come to pass."

"The royalty check ... is less than a drop in the bucket. It's almost as if you loaned someone \$3000 (at your own expense) because they promised to do some good work and pay you back \$1000. Years later, they haven't finished the work but they are offering you twenty cents instead of \$1000, and asking for thousands more."

During the campaign for Proposition 71, supporters strongly argued that destructive research on human embryos was absolutely necessary for the science to proceed and that cures would certainly come. Almost 14 years later, there have been no cures. The royalty check was for a potential therapy for glioblastoma, a deadly brain tumor – but even this is not on the market yet. Thus far, it has only passed

Stage I clinical trials and been written up in glowing terms in O, The Oprah Magazine.

Is it time for the state to set up a stem cell truth and reconciliation commission? As the original \$3 billion ballot initiative runs out of money, we the people of California need to be on the watch that CIRM does not return to the voters of California to ask for even more funding.

A Day at the Mall

By Cecelia Cody

The day started out a bit slow, as have several of our recent Information Tables for Life... however there were several truly inspiring moments. Lots of "Thumbs up" as people passed by, several "repeat visitors" sharing how our materials had helped them in their pro-life outreach, many "Thanks for being here," including from a lady who works with the "Silent No More" post-abortion healing ministry, who told us she has NO PROBLEM with us "cutting off her client flow" by discouraging women from having abortions.

One visitor to the table was going to a baby shower the next day; we provided her with 25 precious feet pins (in blue – the baby is a boy), fetal development bookmarks, as well as several pamphlets and a few "precious Preborn" models. What an opportunity to evangelize for Life! Perhaps you would like to do the same... contact our office if you are going to a baby shower and would like some materials to share (Or maybe you are giving the baby shower and would like some pro-life party favors?)

Early in the afternoon, a high school gal who was unsure about the whole issue of abortion told us a few of her friends had undergone abortions, but she didn't know how she felt about it. We talked to her at length and provided her with some literature. She left more knowledgeable about the issue, and seems to be leaning towards the pro-life position.

"Educating the public on life issues," our main mission, is made possible by your support. Contact us to join us at the tables, and/or start an Info Table for Life in your area.

Calendar of Events

www.calendarforlife.org

Survivors 21st Annual ProLife Boot Camp!
July 23rd - August 2nd, 2018

Change your life forever! Build lifelong friendships with other young people who want to do more than "Be pro-life"; they want to "Act pro-life"! Visit <http://www.survivors.la/annual-summer-bootcamp/>