# Abortion: Legalization and Catholic Churches View

## Introduction

Society is made up of people of all different beliefs, religions, nationalities, cultures and backgrounds. Society at both it’s best and worst reflects on the fact that millions of humans have the same three fundamental needs: control, connection and consistency, with that said everyone has a different point of view on particular topics. The topic I have chosen is abortion, looking into society’s view, the catholic churches view and my own opinion. Abortion is the termination of a pregnancy by a procedure in which empties the uterus of an embryo or foetus, this is for women who have had an unplanned or unwanted pregnancy. Women tend to not have abortions because of the social stigma, abortion stigma is one of the main hurdles towards having an abortion. Abortion stigma is based around the silence, shame, guilt and fear of what other people think and can have an effect on the final decision. Abortion is classified as a criminal act in some states, so there are a variety of legal requirements. The Catholic Church do not support abortion as 'human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person – among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life.' 3. I am not connected to a particular religion and therefore do not have religious beliefs. I agree that women should be able to have an abortion without the laws and stigma attached as well as the shame it can bring on them.

## Should abortion be legalised?

There is a variety of reasons as to why abortion should become legalised, but this all depends on factors that can vary from person to person such as; beliefs, religions, nationality, culture and background. Abortion is illegal in many countries and states in the world but can depend on why the abortion is wanted. There are currently twenty-six countries are illegal and are not to be performed under any circumstances and in thirty-seven countries the performance of an abortion is illegal unless it saves the mothers life. In some countries it is illegal for abortion on request, abortion to save a woman’s life, abortion to preserve a woman’s health, abortion because of rape of incest and abortion because of foetal impairment. These women who are unable to access abortion within their country often have to travel in order for an abortion to be performed this can affect their mental health because the procedure can be quite exhausting both physically and mentally. Not only traveling can be an affect on mental and physical health but so can the abortion stigma that comes along with it. The abortion stigma is the discrediting of individuals as of a result of their association with abortion. An abortion violates two fundamental ideals of womanhood: Nurturing motherhood and sexual purity. Many women do not speak of abortion as they do not want to be shamed.

Abortions should be legalised so that women are able to have the choice to keep the baby if the time is right. A lot of the time women have abortions because the timing isn’t right, financial difficulties and the stability of the relationship. Many people have abortions because it isn’t an environment that they would want the child to grow up in, it is important for the mother and father that the decision they make is wise. Abortions for foetus’ diagnosed with abnormalities, malformities, disabilities or life-threatening illness should be considered. People who don’t

respect the practices of abortion, therefore don't need one and those who do respect its should be able to have the option and opportunity to have one, and not be shamed for it. There is a myth that women who are having abortions are using it as a form of contraception, it was said that if this was true women would have at least two or three pregnancies per year, and 30 or more during her lifetime.

Women who have abortions are often shamed and the women who perform the procedure are referred to as 'dirty workers. Workers feel isolated to talk about their job as they get shamed too. Women who get abortions are referred to and labelled 'sluts, poor, bad people, drug addicts and minority' reference. The three most common reasons as to why women have abortions is the negative impact it can have on a mother's life, financial instability and relationship problems/ unwillingness to be a single mother. If a woman is unable to love and care for the child then abortion should be acceptable because it is better for the foetus to be removed rather than a child that grows up into a family where there could be abuse, mental or physical problems such as drug and alcohol abuse or financial problems. Some young women choose to have an abortion because it would interfere with school or an employment reference . Abortion laws should be removed and it should become illegal, for victims of rape or incest, forgetting protection and failed contraception, it is the woman's choice as to whether she is ready to conceive, love and care for the baby whether the father is in the picture or not. All women have the right to their own bodies and should not be discriminated or shamed for having an abortion and should be able to talk freely about it reference.

## Why won't the law ever be removed?

The abortion law will not be removed because of religious beliefs and background. Women will find it harder to get an abortion if the Religious Discrimination Bill is passed. The Religious Discrimination Bill is "A Bill for an Act relating to discrimination on the grounds of belief or activity, and for related purposes" reference. This is because if the health practitioner has an objectification to performing the procedure based on religious beliefs and backgrounds. The practitioner can refer you to another practitioner based on religious grounds having a stronger legal protection reference. The bill may also restrict the availability of the practice in private hospitals or private clinics to enforce workplace policy that if they reject an abortion, they have to refer the woman to another health practitioner. The Australian Ethical group 'Right to life Australia' believes "Every human being has the inherent right to life" and that this right will be protected by law. Abortion is seen as a crim and if the death penalty is not abolished, a death sentence may be imposed only for the most serious crimes in accordance to law, which in some country's abortion is a serious crime.

## What is the Catholic Churches view?

The Catholic Church opposes all forms of abortion and condemns it, abortion is seen as a sin in the Catholic Church. Although the Catholic Church, assures that there is the possibility for forgiveness for women whom have had an abortion. From the first moment of existence, a human being must be recognized as to have the rights of a person. The church does morally recognise that there are certain acts in which indirectly results in the death of a foetus, removal of a cancerous womb. The bible scriptures teach us that a foetus is a child ever since day one of conception to being developed in the womb and the unborn child has rights of its own that need to be protected. Th Catholic Church believes that just because the child is unwanted or

the parents are not ready, it does not make them at all less of a human and still uphold the same dignity a human being.

The Fifth Commandment is “Thou shalt not kill” an abortion does not abide by the fifth commandment, although the foetus is not alive, it should still be treated with the same respect as a human being. Commandments Six and Nine honour human sexuality ‘Thou shalt not commit adultery and ‘Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife’. These commandments forbid the actual, physical act having immoral sexual activity, commandment Six forbids Fornication, this is the act of sex between unmarried people, prostitution, pornography, homosexual activity, masturbation, group sex, rape, incest, pedophilia, bestiality and necrophilia. The Ninth Commandment forbids the intentional desire and longing for immoral sexuality “Just as human life id a gift from God and needs to be respected, defended, and protected, so, too, is human sexuality”. Sexual acts for the Catholic Church have performed within marriage.” The sacrament of Marriage is a lasting commitment of a man and women to a lifelong partnership, established for the good of each other and the procreation of children.” reference

## What is my personal view?

I have not grown up with a personal faith or religion, so my opinion is based upon my background and upbringing. I personally believe that all women should have the right to an abortion if they think that it will be beneficial to them and the child. In today’s society and generations there are many abortions being performed because of unwanted pregnancies commonly between people who aren’t partners. I believe that women who have been victims of rape or incest should be entitled to an abortion no matter their religion or background, it is not their fault that they are pregnant and shouldn’t have to deal with the trauma of carrying a baby to someone who attacked them without consent. For mothers who chooses to carry out an abortion based on their financial status and being unable to support the child are doing the right thing, I would prefer for a child to grow up in an environment that is happy and healthy rather than one where they could be struggling to survive. I think that the Catholic Churches view is cruel as the heart of a foetus does not start beating until after 5 weeks of development, therefore the child is technically not alive. Today's society has sexual intercourse for the reasons of pleasure and not procreation, I think that if appropriate contraception is used then there isn’t a problem and the church's view is out-dated.

## Conclusion

There are a variety of reasons as to why abortions will not become legalised in some countries and that is based on religion, beliefs and background. Abortion should be legal if it is for the protection of a foetus, if it mean that the child does not have to grow up in an unsafe or environment where its is unwanted