

# Incest

According to Susan Forward, in the book *Betrayal of Innocence*, incest is any overtly sexual contact between people who are either closely related or perceive themselves to be closely related (including step-parents, step-siblings, and even live-in lovers if they have assumed a parental role). If the special trust that exists between a child and a parent figure or sibling is violated by a sexual act, that act becomes incestuous..."

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*"The case against abortion of incest pregnancies is even stronger. Studies show that incest victims rarely ever voluntarily agree to an abortion. 4 Instead of viewing the pregnancy as unwanted, the incest victim is more likely to see the pregnancy as a way out of the incestuous relationship because the birth of her child will expose the sexual activity.*

She is also likely to see in her pregnancy the hope of bearing a child with whom she can establish a true loving relationship, one far different than the exploitive relationship in which she has been trapped.

But while the incest victim may treasure her pregnancy because it offers her hope of release, and the hope of finding a nurturing love, her pregnancy is a threat to the exploiter. It is also a threat to the pathological secrecy which may envelop other members of the family who are afraid to acknowledge that the abuse is occurring. Because of this dual threat, the victim may be coerced into an unwanted abortion by both the abuser and other family members.

For example, Edith Young, a 12-year-old victim of incest impregnated by her stepfather, writes twenty-five years after the abortion of her child: "Throughout the years I have been depressed, suicidal, furious, outraged, lonely, and have felt a sense of loss..."

The abortion which was to 'be in my best interest' just has not been. As far as I can tell, it only 'saved their reputations,' 'solved their problems,' and 'allowed their lives to go merrily on.'... My daughter, how I miss her so. I miss her regardless of the reason for her conception."

## References

1. Mahkorn, "Pregnancy and Sexual Assault," *The Psychological Aspects of Abortion*, eds. Mall & Watts, (Washington, D.C., University Publications of America, 1979) 55-69.
2. Francke, *The Ambivalence of Abortion* (New York: Random House, 1978) 84-95, 167.; Reardon, *Aborted Women - Silent No More* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1987), 51, 126.
3. Zakus, "Adolescent Abortion Option," *Social Work in Health Care*, 12(4):87 (1987).
4. Maloof, "The Consequences of Incest: Giving and Taking Life" *The Psychological Aspects of Abortion* (eds. Mall & Watts, Washington, D.C., University Publications of America, 1979) 84-85.

## *What of incest?*

How does the incest victim feel about being pregnant?

\*Most incestuous pregnancies, if not pressured, will not get abortions.

"As socially inappropriate as incest and incestuous pregnancies are, their harmful effects depend largely upon reaction of others."

ibid, Maloof, p. 100

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**Teenage abortions have more complications than those done on older women. Teenage deliveries are as safe as, and perhaps safer, than deliveries done on older women:**

It is also unusual for wisdom to dictate anything but adoptive placement of the baby.

#### Abortion for Incest

The first and basic moral argument against abortion for rape applies to cases of incest as well. If we realize that a child is present, if we identify with her, if we have full and equal concern for the mother and child, if we realize that we cannot kill one innocent person to try to benefit another, that we cannot do wrong to try to achieve good, then we will see clearly that abortion for incest is absolutely wrong; a clear-cut wrong, and not a legitimate exception.

The second major argument against abortion for rape - that abortion is an assault on the woman, that it is counterproductive, largely because it is based on a false picture of the actual problem - applies here as well. Reardon's argument is along these lines, and he adds certain features specific to incest pregnancies.

*As with rape, abortion proponents appealed to emotional abhorrence of incest to gain support for abortion while ignoring the real needs of the victims. Abortion was simply presumed to be the best answer - at least best for society if not for the women, girls or children. Through abortion, they suggested, we could cover up these embarrassing victims of our sick society; we could destroy the "unclean" offspring of our sexual perversions. But in fact, just as with rape, there is no psychiatric evidence, nor even any theory which argues that abortion of an incestuous pregnancy is therapeutic for the victim - it is only more convenient for everyone else.*

Setting aside the paternalistic attitudes with which society presumes that abortion is best for the incest victim, we must ask what do these girls themselves want? ... Almost all incest victims actually desire to keep the baby, and the majority do! Those who do abort do so under pressure from the impregnating relative who is seeking to cover-up his crime, and even in these cases, the victims abort only with resentment.<sup>54</sup>

Abortion of an incestuous pregnancy ... not only adds to the girl's guilt and trauma, it also frustrates her plans for escape and attention. Abortion perpetuates the "conspiracy of silence" by covering up the incest, or at least its results, and continues the family pattern of denying reality.<sup>55</sup>

The problem the pregnant incest victim faces is not the pregnancy, it is the psychological pain of incest. Again, as with rape, it is the discrimination and superstitions of those around her which make the pregnancy difficult, not the pregnancy itself.<sup>56</sup>

Dr. George Maloof speaks in the same vein: Whatever else we may be doing by an abortion of an incestuous pregnancy, we are promoting mental illness by not allowing the girl to accept the consequences of her own acts . . . Accepting the pregnancy can be the first step to accepting the incest and making the changes to alter the family pattern so that it can be more productive rather than withholding and destructive.<sup>57</sup>

*Rape, Incest and Abortion: Searching Beyond the Myths*

*David C. Reardon, Ph.D.*

"How can you deny an abortion to a twelve-year-old girl who is the victim of incest?"

**But in fact, the welfare of the mother and child are never at odds, even in sexual assault cases.**

Abortion involves a painful examination of a woman's sexual organs by a masked stranger who is invading her body. Once she is on the operating table, she loses control over her body. If she protests and asks for the abortionist to stop, she will likely be ignored or told: "It's too late to change your mind. This is what you wanted. We have to finish now." And while she lies there tense and helpless, the life hidden within her is literally sucked out of her womb.

## *Fetal abnormalities as a result of incest?*

Swedish psychiatrist Dr. Carl Olstrom has heavy experience in the study of fetal deformities resulting from incest, and says that "There is no evidence to support the assumption that children resulting from incestuous relationships [with a father or mother] run a greater risk of being malformed than other children."

Carl Henry Olstrom, M.D. Medical World News , February 4, 1967.

However, three much smaller studies showed serious birth defects in up to one-fourth of all children that were a product of bloodline incest, an incidence that is about fifteen times the expected normal frequency.

Mary Meehan. "Facing the Hard Cases." Human Life Review , Summer 1983, pages 19 to 36.

From the standpoint of pure eugenics, we must ask ourselves two questions; (1) "Are handicapped people as valuable as those who are not handicapped?," and, if the answer to the first question is "No," we must ask ourselves the second question: "Are we willing to kill a minimum of three perfectly healthy children for every one that may have a handicap?"

Abortion is just as inept a solution for incest as it is for rape or any other reason -- especially from the psychological point of view. Incest expert R. Bruce Sloan, M.D., states that "The psychiatric basis for terminating the life of an unborn baby incestuously conceived has absolutely no scientific merit and derives from a blind adherence to a legal formulation espoused by abortion promoters now including organized psychiatry."

R. Bruce Sloan, M.D. *New England Journal of Medicine* . Quoted in G. Maloof, M.D., "The Consequences of Incest." *The Psychological Aspects of Abortion* . University Publications of America, 1979, page 74.

**Abortion As a Coverup for Incest. Abortion is the best possible coverup for incest. Perhaps this is why groups of organized pedophiles and pederasts -- including the North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA)**

-- are stridently pro-abortion. NAMBLA insists that taboos against incest are 'antiquated' and 'outmoded.'<sup>[15]</sup> There is absolutely no reason for an organization consisting of child molesters to advocate abortion except to cover up the most damning evidence of their crimes.

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"Opponents of abortion rights walk a fine line within their own movement when they condone any abortion. Based on their own definition, they are guilty of being accessories to "murder" in certain circumstances by accepting rape and incest exceptions."

-- 'Religious' Coalition for Abortion Rights.

A final thought:

*"There is always an easy solution to every human problem -- neat, plausible, and wrong."*  
-- H.L. Mencken.