

Perspectives From NAPW Staff, Supporters and Allies Who Marched for Women's Lives

Why We Marched

John & Amber Marlowe, April 26, 2004



On April 25th 2004, we participated in the March for Women's Lives with people whose values and ideals of life are very different from our own. We did not march to support abortion, selfishness or lawlessness. We believe that a child is a person from the moment of conception, and do not believe

any person has the right to decide the fate of another. We believe that every child is a blessing from God no matter what the circumstances are.

So why did we march to support "Pro-choice?" Because "Pro-choice" is the only choice that keeps America free. We marched because we experienced first-hand what America will look like if the "Pro-life" position prevails. We learned the hard way when we went to deliver our seventh child.

Doctors at a Pennsylvania hospital, people who hardly knew us, decided that this seventh wanted child needed to be delivered by a cesarean section. We have no religious objection to surgery, but after six previous natural, healthy deliveries my wife knew her own body and knew that a c-section was unnecessary. She refused to agree to unnecessary surgery that creates additional risks to both the mother and the child. The doctors treated us very poorly. They made it clear that our opinions, experience, and desires meant nothing to them. We as the parents were simply obstacles in the way of what they wanted.

Because we would not give in, lawyers for the hospital went to court asking for the right to override our wishes and to force my wife to have surgery. They based their legal filings on the "Pro-life" arguments used to oppose abortion – that the fetus is a separate legal person with separate legal rights. They argued that this child still inside the womb was exactly the same as one that had already been born, and that we as her parents had no right to stand in the way of surgery that would benefit her. The hospital's lawyers didn't mention that in order to do this they would have to cut through my wife's body. They didn't mention the additional risks c-sections entail or that we were making this decision to protect both my wife and our child. They did not mention that my wife had not given up her constitutional rights when she became pregnant. Based on the hospital's one-sided arguments, the local court granted the order, giving the hospital custody of our child before, during, and after delivery and giving the hospital the right to force my wife to have the surgery.

We fled from this overbearing hospital before the court order

was obtained. My wife delivered a wonderful, healthy baby naturally without any complications whatsoever. Neither the baby nor the mother were actually in any danger – except from the fetal rights theories that the doctors used against our family.

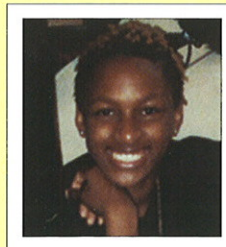
The subject in question is not when does a child become a person, but rather are we as Americans ready to surrender ourselves and our children to the authority of the State. The same government that has the power to say a woman cannot have an abortion, has the power to say a woman must have an abortion – or in our case a totally unnecessary cesarean operation. Any laws passed giving a fetus rights, takes away personal rights, and if personal rights can be taken away from one group such as pro-choice, then they can be taken away from anybody. We learned that the people pushing for anti-abortion laws are actually pushing for forced abortion and c-section laws; they are one and the same.

As people who have read the entire Bible cover to cover many times, we cannot understand why a Christian would press for anti-abortion laws governing a non-Christian's body or children. God commanded Israel not to sacrifice their own children to Molech. He never said to stop the Amorites. America is not a Christian nation. It is a mixed nation with Christian roots. People who support the "Pro-life" movement should understand that they are placing power in a secular system that does not necessarily hold the same values they do.

We marched in Washington to preserve our rights as granted by God our creator and established through the Constitution of the United States. Among those marching were people with whom we strongly disagree about many things – but ultimately all of us were there to stop laws that give the government the power to control our decisions and our lives. We marched in Washington to stop bad government. We marched in Washington in support of the "Pro-choice" movement because we have six daughters and if they choose to have children, we want that choice to still be available. ■

The Day I Called Myself a Feminist

Acree Paulette McIntosh



I have always been apprehensive about calling myself a feminist. Everything I knew about feminism was about white women. Nevertheless, I was raised to be a strong, vocal, independent woman. I've always known that being a girl was a wonderful thing to be and that being a black