

# Abortion is a men's issue, too

Transcript of a talk given by Mike Buchanan, leader of the British political party [Justice for Men & Boys](#), at the [Messages 4 Men conference](#), London, 17 November, 2019

Good evening. I'd like to draw on our last general election [manifesto](#) on the issue of abortion, particularly relating to the situation in the UK. Elective abortions are permissible in the UK up to 24 weeks after conception. When the 1967 Abortion Act was passed, 24-week-old fetuses were not viable, but with the passage of time and the advance of medical technology, they increasingly *are* viable. In the same hospital today, one medical team could be fighting to save the life of a 24-week-old foetus, while another medical team is killing a foetus of the same age.

There comes a point at which the basic right to life of an unborn child overrides the right of a woman over her body. One person's rights end where another person's rights begin. In an age when contraception has long been readily available and highly reliable, women should be held morally accountable for the children they conceive. We believe there's a point in pregnancy when society – and the law – needs to recognize the right of the unborn child to life.

When the Abortion Act (1967) was passed, the British public was assured it wouldn't lead to abortion on demand. That assurance has, predictably, proved hollow. Abortion on demand has been freely available in the UK for over half a century. Over 10 million fetuses – or unborn children, depending on your perspective – have been killed in the UK since the passing of the Act. Every year around 200,000 more are killed.

There's a growing awareness that 97% of the abortions carried out in England, Wales, and Scotland, are carried out on grounds which may be illegal. The Abortion Act permits elective abortions to be performed on numerous grounds, when authorized by two medical practitioners. One of the grounds is to reduce the risk of injury to the mental health of women.

In 2012, in England and Wales, over 185,000 abortions were carried out. Over 180,000 of them (97%) were carried out under grounds 'C' of the Abortion Act, which stipulates the following – 'the pregnancy has not exceeded its twenty-fourth week and the continuance of the pregnancy would involve risk, greater than if the pregnancy were terminated, of injury to the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman (section 1(1)(a))'.

Of those 180,000+ abortions, almost all (99.94 per cent) were carried out on the grounds of reducing the risk of injury to women's mental health. Only 109 abortions (0.06% of the total) were carried out on the grounds of reducing the risk of injury to the women's *physical* health.

There is no evidence to support the thesis that abortion reduces the risk to mental health of women with an unwanted pregnancy. *None*. Clinical trials to investigate the matter would, of course, be highly unethical. There is, however, some evidence to suggest that abortion itself *increases* the risk to mental health, so medical practitioners who authorize abortions on mental health risk grounds are doing so in the knowledge there's no body of research to support their authorizations, and that is arguably illegal.

In December 2011 The National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health published a 252-page report for the Academy of Medical Royal Colleges, *Induced Abortion and Mental Health: a systematic review of the mental health outcomes of induced abortion, including their prevalence and associated factors*. Among the key findings of the report was this:

**The rate of mental health problems for women with an unwanted pregnancy were the same whether they had an abortion or gave birth.**

In April 2013 the Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry published a report titled, *Does abortion reduce the mental health risks of unwanted or unplanned pregnancy? A re-appraisal of the evidence*. The full conclusion of the report was this:

**There is no available evidence to suggest that abortion has therapeutic effects in reducing the mental health risks of unwanted or unintended pregnancy. There is suggestive evidence that abortion may be associated with small to moderate increases in risks of anxiety, alcohol misuse, illicit drug use, and suicidal behaviour.**

In our manifesto we made proposals in three areas:

1. The Abortion Act (1967) should be amended to limit women's right to have an abortion on the grounds of reducing the risk of injury to their mental health to a maximum of 13 weeks after conception. At this stage the gender of the embryo is unclear, so this would result in the end of gender-specific abortions, the incidence of which in the UK is a matter of some dispute.
2. The Abortion Act (1967) should remain unchanged with respect to women's rights to have abortions carried out on the grounds of reducing the risk of injury to their physical health.
3. It should be a criminal offence for a British woman to have an abortion outside the UK more than 13 weeks after conception, on grounds other than reducing the risk of injury to her physical health.

I'd like to continue with a thought experiment. I'd like you to imagine yourselves living in a patriarchy, and more specifically a patriarchy as envisaged by feminists, one in which men as a class oppress women and girls as a class, for the benefit of men and boys, as they have for millennia.

In this patriarchy, of course, women wouldn't have the vote. Let's further imagine that in 1967 an Act was passed, not the Abortion Act, but an Act that gave fathers of babies up to 24 weeks of age the right to have their babies killed by doctors at taxpayers' expense, without fear of punishment. Mothers would have no right to stop the killing of their babies. In the 52 years since the Act was passed, over 10 million babies have been killed, and every year another 200,000 plus are killed. Fathers justify their right to have their babies killed with the slogan, "My baby, my choice".

If we do a parent gender switch, rather than babies under 24 weeks of age being killed at the behest of their fathers, we have foetuses under 24 weeks of age being killed at the behest of their mothers, the reality of abortion in the UK since 1967. Now of course there are differences between a 24 week old baby and a 24 week old foetus, but neither are viable without external support and protection – in the case of the foetus, that of its mother. Killing 24 week old foetuses and 24 week old babies seems to me to be morally equivalent.

I've been an atheist for about 45 years, since I was a teenager, but it's all too evident to me that with the decline of religion in the UK – and the decline of Christianity, in particular – the nation's moral compass has been well and truly shattered. Nobody in their right mind would advocate for the right of fathers to have their babies killed. Yet society turns a blind eye to the right of mothers to have their unborn children killed, under the name of women's rights. I look forward to a future of MRAs increasingly working with religious people on matters of common interest, such as abortion.

Feminism is, among other things, a death cult, and no group in the world is keener on abortion than feminists. Feminists are keen on the right of women to kill their unborn children, and they have not the *slightest* interest in the responsibility of women to protect them. That's been a theme of feminism from the beginning, of course – ever more rights, ever fewer responsibilities.

The rallying cry of feminists with respect to abortion is, of course, “My Body, My Choice”. And why is that? As always with feminists, it's about power. By stating that only women can decide on abortion, women gain power over life and death, and men are denied it.

Under the terms of the Sexual Offences Act 2003, the work of radical feminists, only men can rape in the UK – in legal terms, at least. Nobody, least of all anti-feminists, would say that because women cannot (under the law) rape, their voices should not be heard on the subject. Yet feminists assert that because men can't become pregnant, they're not entitled to speak on the issue of abortion. The double standard is obvious. Post-menopausal women can't conceive – should *their* views on abortion be silenced, too?

We'd rightly be appalled by a man who raped a woman – or a man, for that matter – and said in his defence, “My Body, My Choice”. And why? Because the crime has a victim, whether a woman or a man. The most obvious victim in abortions is, of course, the unborn child who is killed. But there are other victims, most notably the father of the unborn child, who may desperately wish to see it born and develop. He may even be willing to be the sole parent to the child. No matter. The woman has all the power, the man none. How many men have suffered egregiously because women in this country have decided to have their unborn children killed since the 1967 Abortion Act? Possibly *millions* of them.

The feminist position that 50 per cent of adults should have no right to oppose the killing of unborn children is nothing short of *obscene*. The men's rights movement is increasingly recognizing that abortion is a men's issue, as well as a women's issue, and I believe Men's Rights Activists will increasingly fight to save the lives of unborn children. Thank you.

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Mike Buchanan

Mobile: 07967 026163

Email: [mike@j4mb.org.uk](mailto:mike@j4mb.org.uk)