

Just in Time

Category: Abortion: Then and Now
written by Pris Campbell | July 20, 2022

I still remember the thrill when the *Roe v. Wade* decision was issued. In grad school, a friend had tried to abort with a coat hanger when her boyfriend dumped her and offered no support. I was always careful about contraception but knew a number of women who became pregnant even using it. I never expected to need an abortion but was grateful once I had that option.

I had hurt my back and worked and commuted long hours as a psychologist at a fulfilling job with a prestigious VA. It was not the kind of place likely to keep a divorced, pregnant, high-profile person on the staff. I was also on my own financially, was in my thirties, and had no desire to drag a child to daycare at 6:30 in the morning and pick them up at 5:30—if I even was able to keep my job.

Two years after *Roe v. Wade*, I found myself pregnant despite contraception. There were no test kits then, so I went to a nearby women's clinic for testing to confirm my presumption. They were very supportive, requiring a talk with a counselor before I made any final decisions. The father, whom I had been living with, made it plain that he was out of the picture if I had the child, so no support would come from that quarter.

The counselor was satisfied, and the abortion was a week later. They gave me 10mg of Valium and then meds to start my cervix dilating. I hadn't expected the procedure to be so painful and cried on the table. A counselor stayed with me and held my hand. My legs were draped, and at the right time a doctor came in and vacuumed the fetus out. I never saw his face or spoke with him. The clinic insisted that an IUD be inserted, then gave me a place to lie down until the bleeding stopped.

Afterward, I took a taxi home, worn out but grateful. It was the right decision for me. Now that decision has been taken away from women the age I was then. My heart aches for them and for the decreasing rights women have in what is truly an evangelical male world.

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