

DemoKino - Virtual Biopolitical Agora

www.aksioma.org/demokino

Abortion

A project by Davide Grassi

Screenwriter: Antonio Caronia

Production and distribution:



Aksioma – Institute for Contemporary Arts, Ljubljana, 2003

www.aksioma.org

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(telephone rings)

Kolja: Hello?...Hi Nick, how's it going?...ouu really?!...Maybe it is time for us to get together for a drink so we can talk a bit...all right...fine for me...at 3 o'clock at the Quincy bar...Byeee!

So...Laura has decided...

She is having an interview next week, after that the necessary examinations and in fifteen or twenty days the operation.

She'll put everything behind her at last.

Of course, I am sorry that she is having the abortion. Nick told me he would be happy to have a child. But they are still so young.

Laura said her husband realized that for the time being they are not in a position to keep the baby. After all, she should be the one to decide.

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Well, who knows if it is really only her call. There is a life at stake. She carries another life inside her body. It is about a month or a month and a half since she got pregnant. The embryo is quite developed at this stage.

What if the anti-abortionists are right claiming that every abortion is legalized murder?

The bottom line is there are two lives involved, not just one. You can not crush one life, defenceless as it is, in order to comply with the demands of another person. Not even if it implies solving problems, however serious, of that person.

That is simply not true. The only person really involved is the woman, whose pregnancy is a very unique state. A new life is about to evolve inside her but it is not yet formed. It is a life in the making.

In such a situation the only person with the right to decide whether to keep the baby or not is the woman. It is a question of freedom.

If the woman doesn't want to keep the baby she has the right to interrupt her pregnancy.

When the feminist movements around the world fought for the right to abort they did it for a reason. They fought for the woman's right to regain control of her own body. It is a fundamental right of every person. It is unacceptable that the pregnant state should become the pretext to deprive women of this right.

I've never felt so confused. All these doubts did not assail me years ago.

Maybe the fact that my closest friend is experiencing this difficult situation makes me ponder the background more carefully. I just can't decide clearly which is the morally right choice.

What did Abraham Lincoln say? *"No one has the right to decide one thing if that thing is wrong."*

Maybe the main issue here is not woman's free choice but the question whether abortion is right or wrong. And if abortion is wrong, no woman has the right to commit this wrong.

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The fundamental dilemma is this: does the life of a person begin with birth, with delivery to this world, or does it begin earlier on in the mother's womb?

Is a foetus a living human being or not? We must first understand what life is.

If life is essentially the capacity of cells to reproduce and differentiate to form organs, than the foetus is a living being. And no doubt, it is a human being because it already has all the chromosomes of a human being.

It certainly is a potential human being.

In this case, abortion is nothing but a crime and legalizing abortion equals legalizing murder.

Yet, this can't be. It's all crap.

The life of a human being is all about relations. The foetus has no relations with the world nor with other humans except through its mother.

It is simple biology that gives the mother control over the foetus's life and this life is not yet a human life.

There are cases where abortion seems clearly to be the best choice both for the mother and for the child.

A recent case comes to my mind of a child being born practically without a brain. The mother was aware of it because of the exams she underwent, yet she didn't want to abort. Isn't this one truly unhappy child? Wouldn't it have been better for it not to have been born?

Let's try to imagine what would happen if abortion became illegal like it was before a law was passed.

Women would continue to abort, this is one sure thing.
Abortions have been performed at all times and in every social class.

The truth is that abortion, though sad, has always been a means of birth control.

Now, it may be an improper means but it has always also served that purpose.

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If abortion was illegal, it would be performed without medical assistance and in poor hygienic conditions. Illegal abortion would also imply illegal profits for those practicing it.

It would mean more deaths among women who chose what should be their right under the law. Do we really want to take this step back to times when women were dying of abortion?

All of these considerations matter very little if the foetus is indeed a living human being and if destroying a life is a crime. I think I have read somewhere that abortions walk hand in hand with infantile organs' traffic.

It involves those late abortions that are performed after 30 weeks of gestation.

These abortions are done with special techniques to allow the extraction of a living foetus or at least with the organs still functioning.

There are even organizations that thrive on this traffic. They have connections with abortion clinics and deliver the foetuses or the necessary organs to the buyers. The bigger and more developed the organs, the higher the price. I've read about cases where the foetus appears dead but when they open it, the heart is still beating. It is a disgusting business.

Here's the dilemma: **do we want to safeguard the foetus's right to life or the mother's right to free choice?**

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